HARROW COUNTY™

HEDGE MAGIC

"Highly recommended for people who like their horror more cerebral and creepy."
—Newsarama

CULLEN BUNN ◆ TYLER CROOK

HARROW

HEDGE MAGIC

COUNTY™

HARROW COUNTY™

HEDGE MAGIC

Script
CULLEN BUNN

Art and Lettering
TYLER CROOK

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Harrow County Volume 6: Hedge Magic

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This volume collects *Harrow County* #21–#24.

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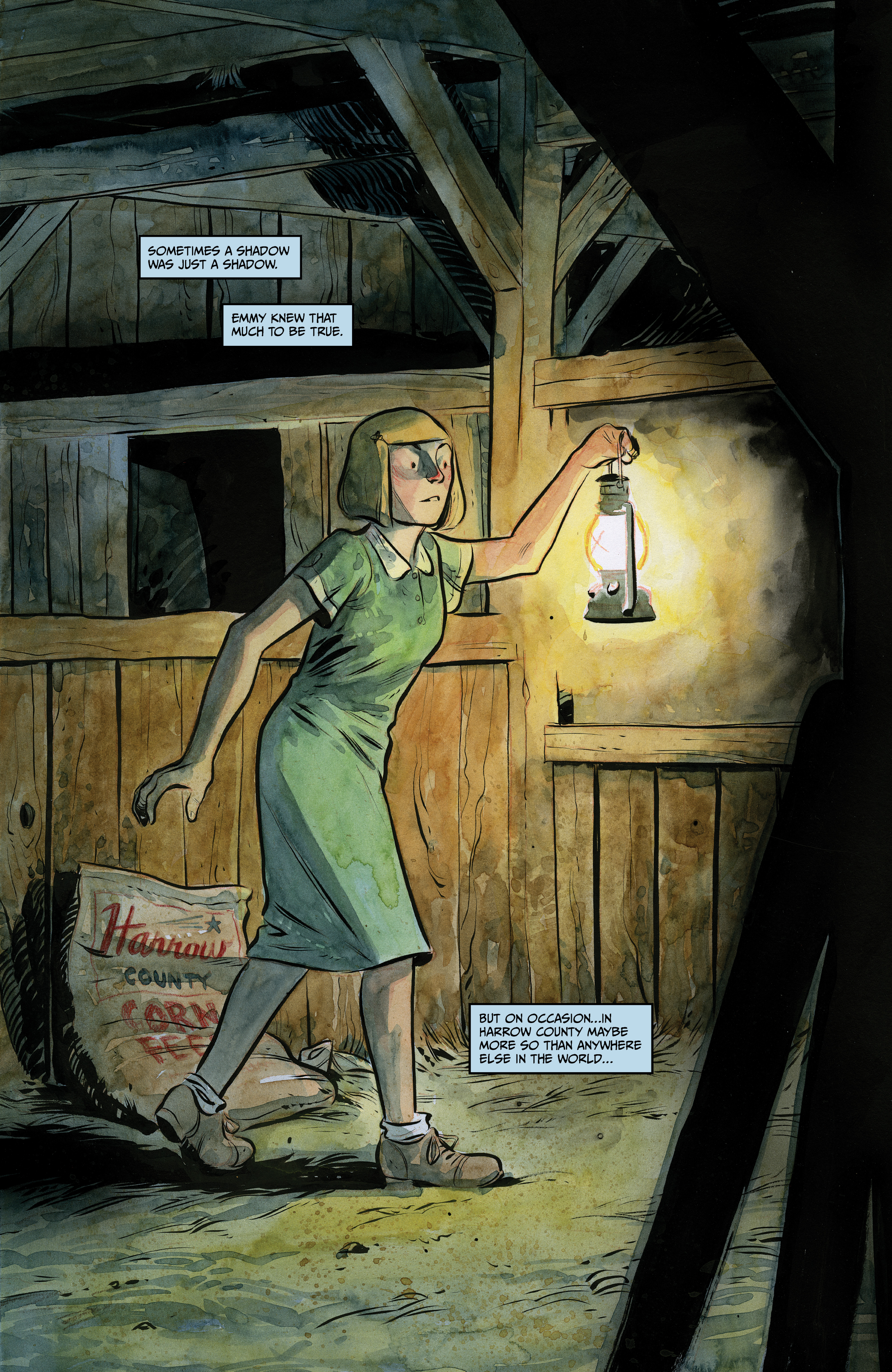
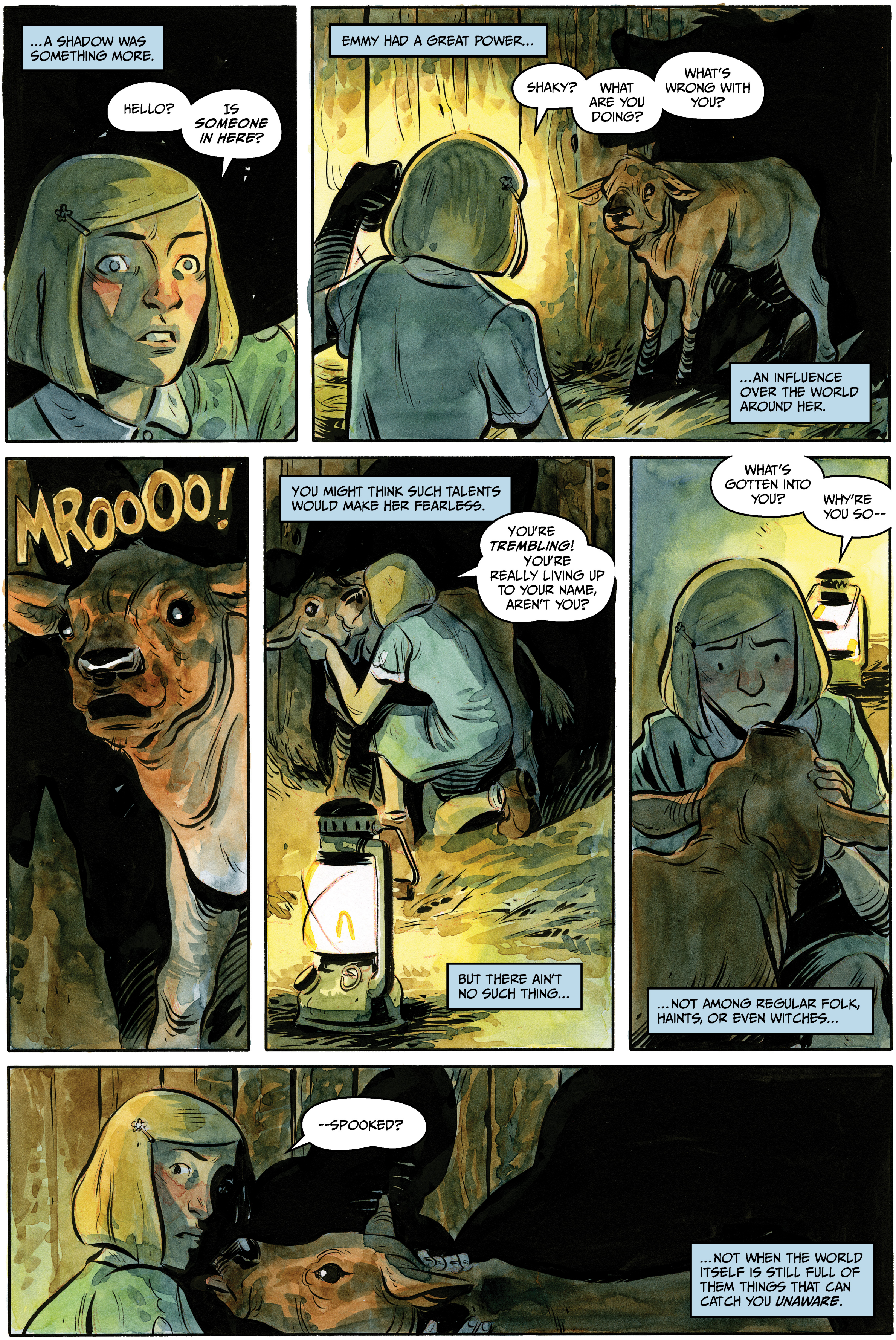
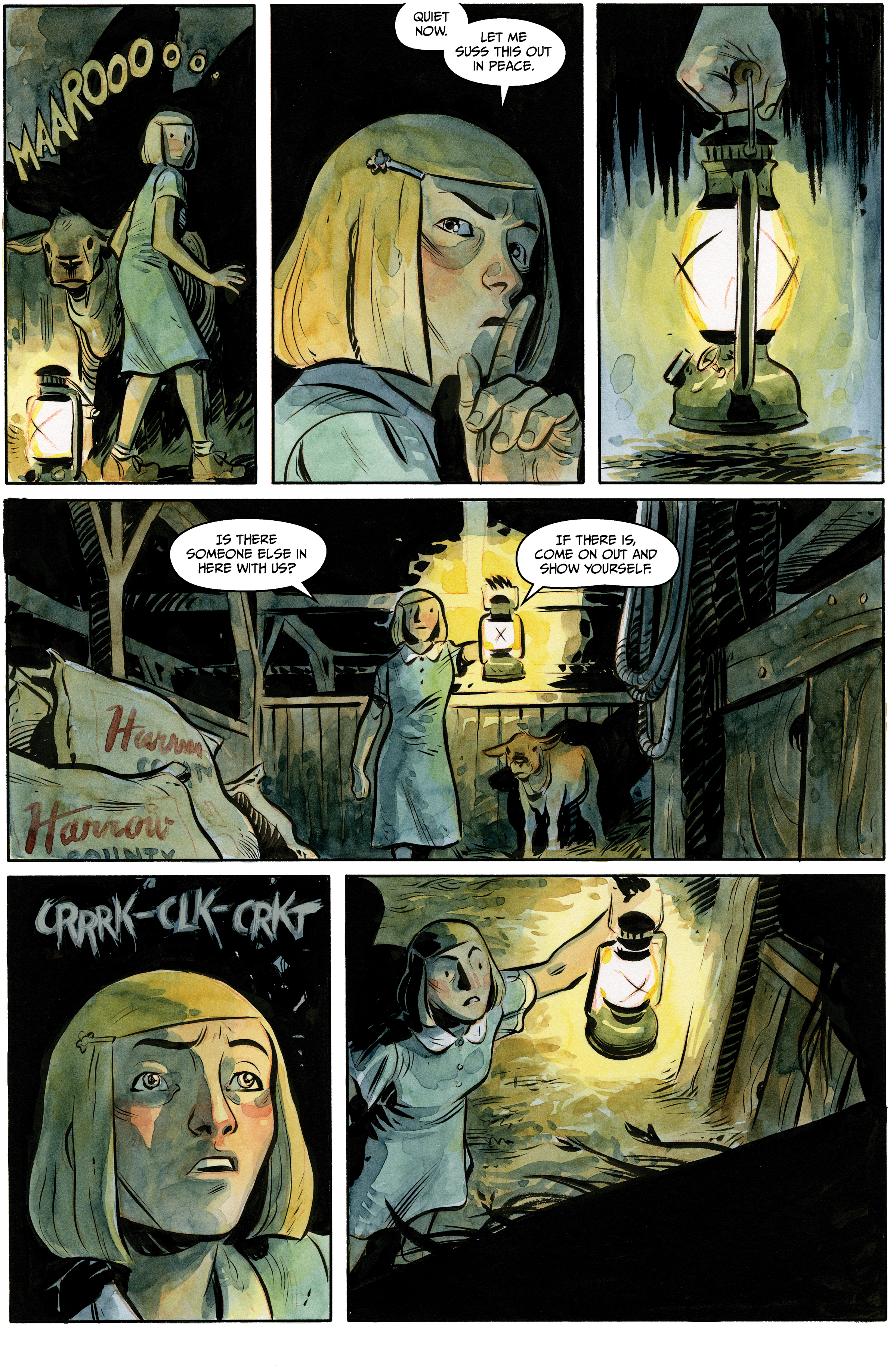
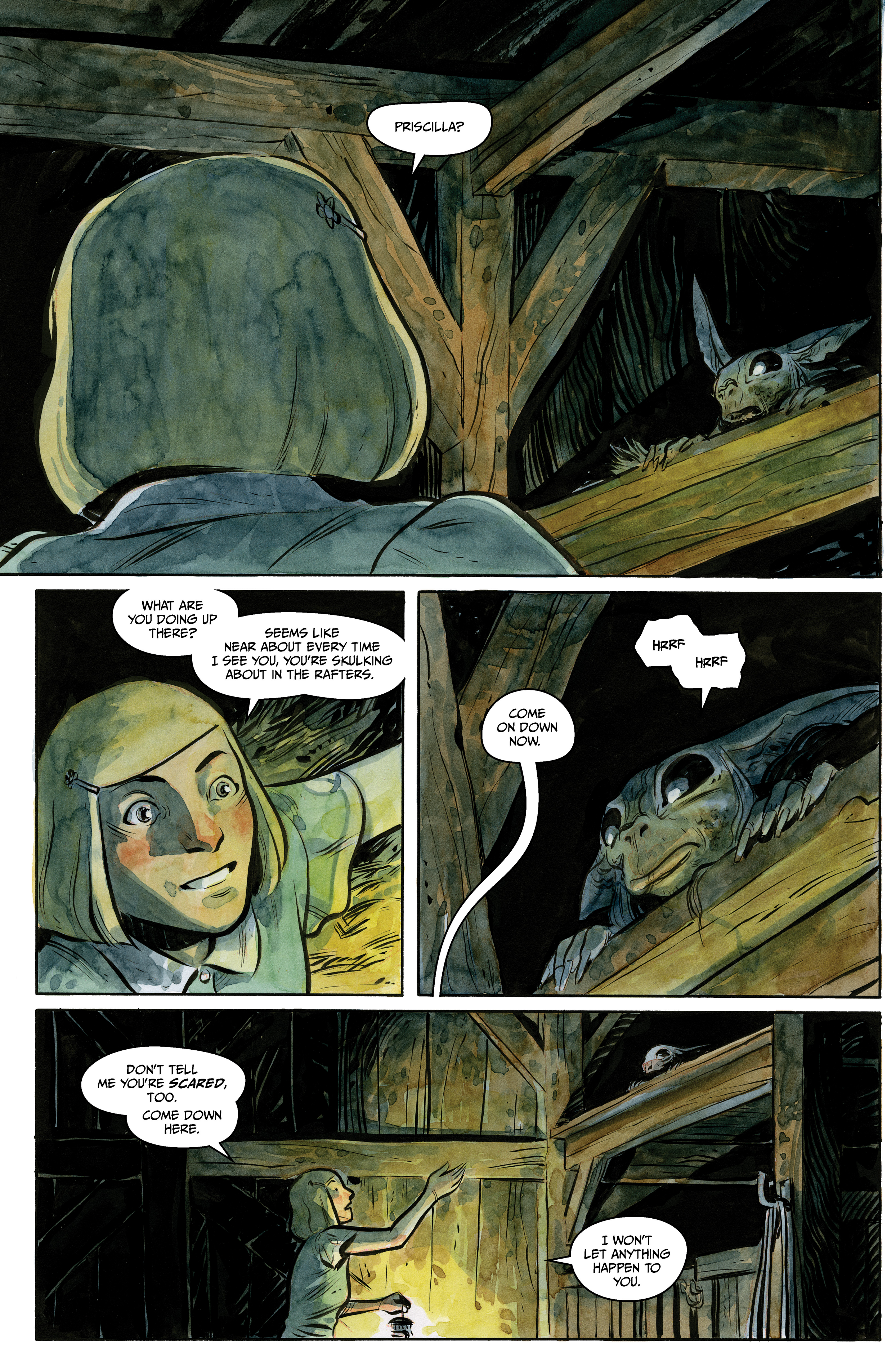
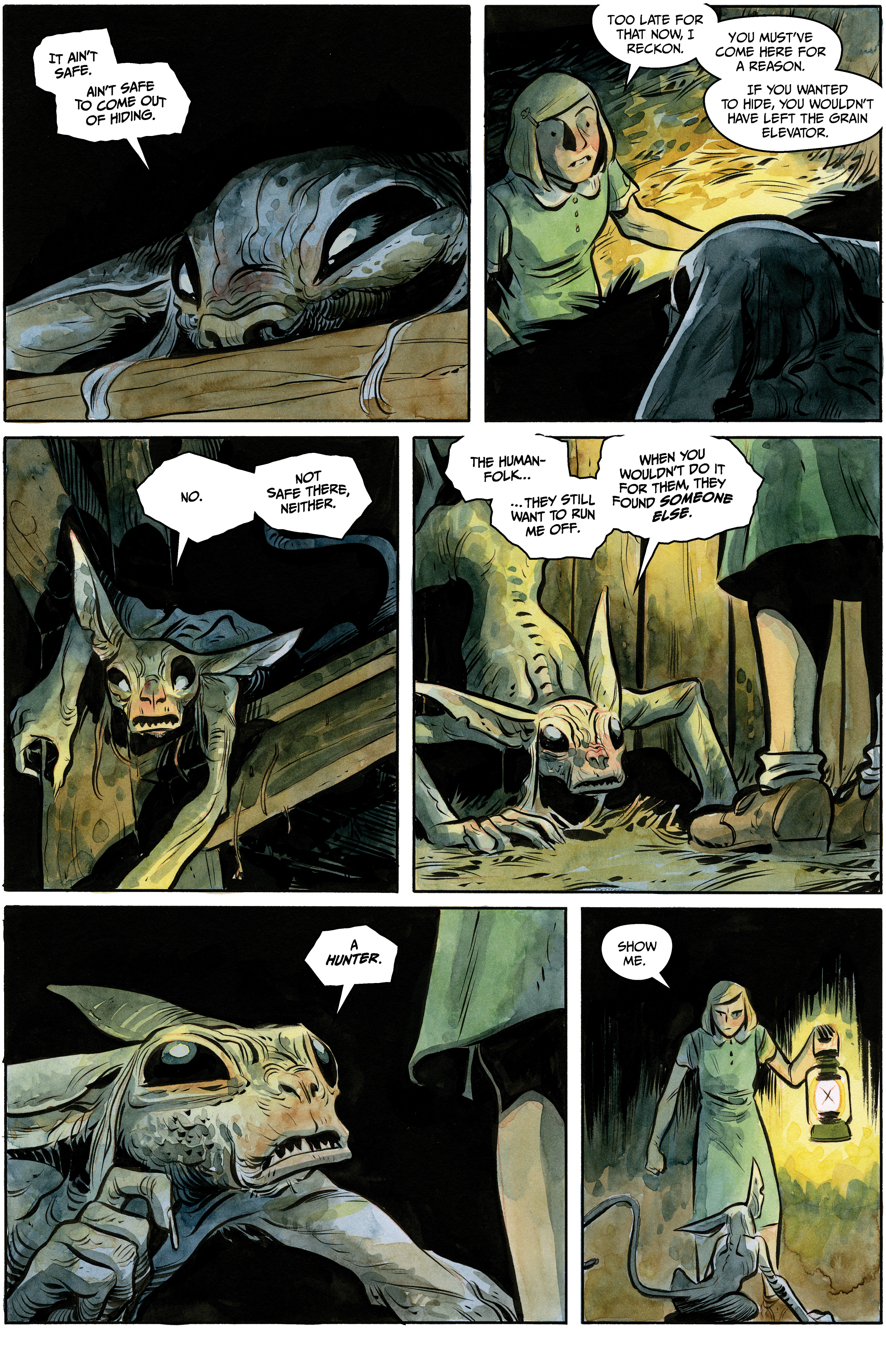
ONE

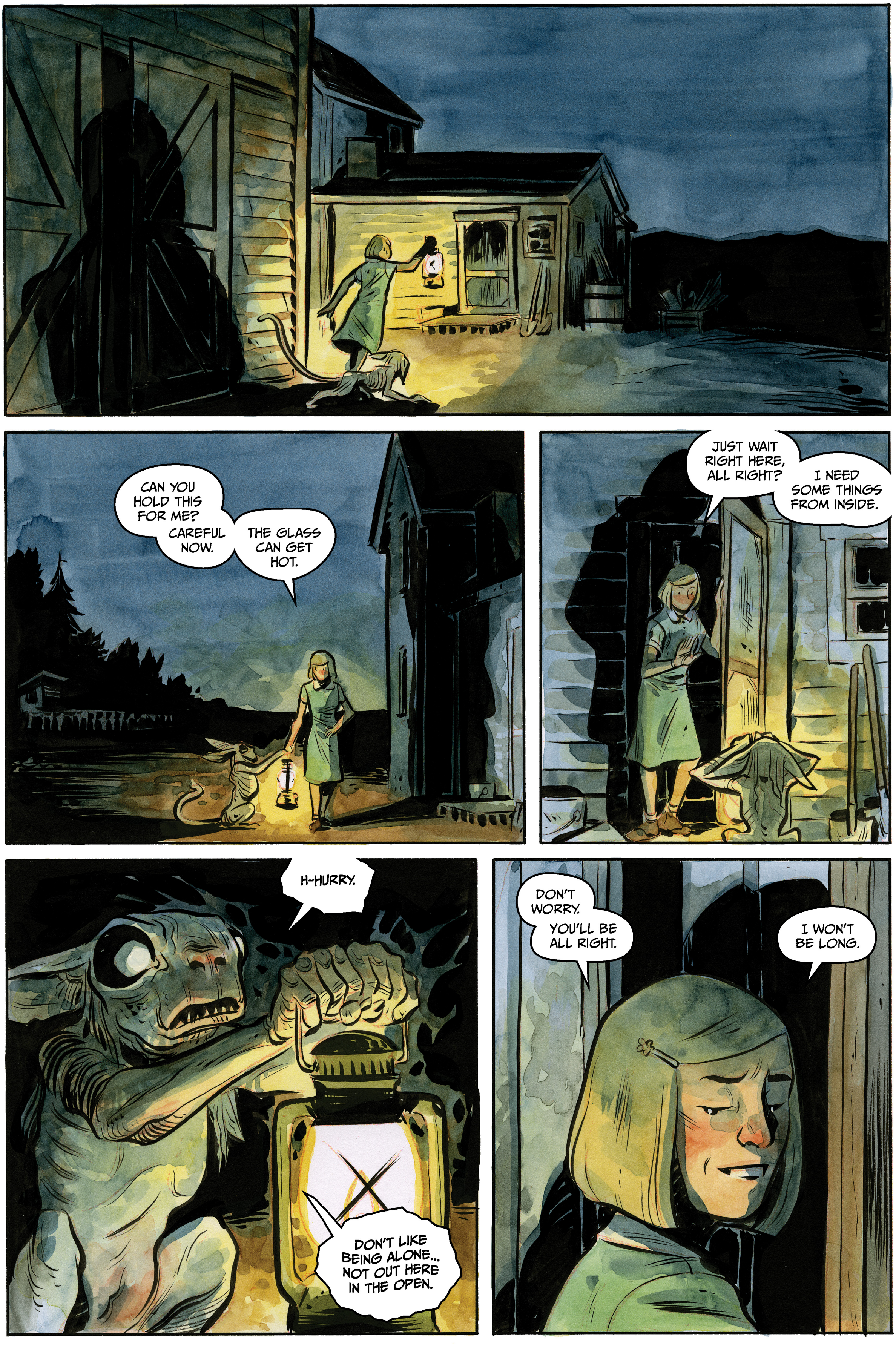

SOMETIMES A SHADOW WAS JUST A SHADOW.
EMMY KNEW THAT MUCH TO BE TRUE.
Harrow COUNTY CORN FEE
BUT ON OCCASION...IN HARROW COUNTY MAYBE MORE SO THAN ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD...

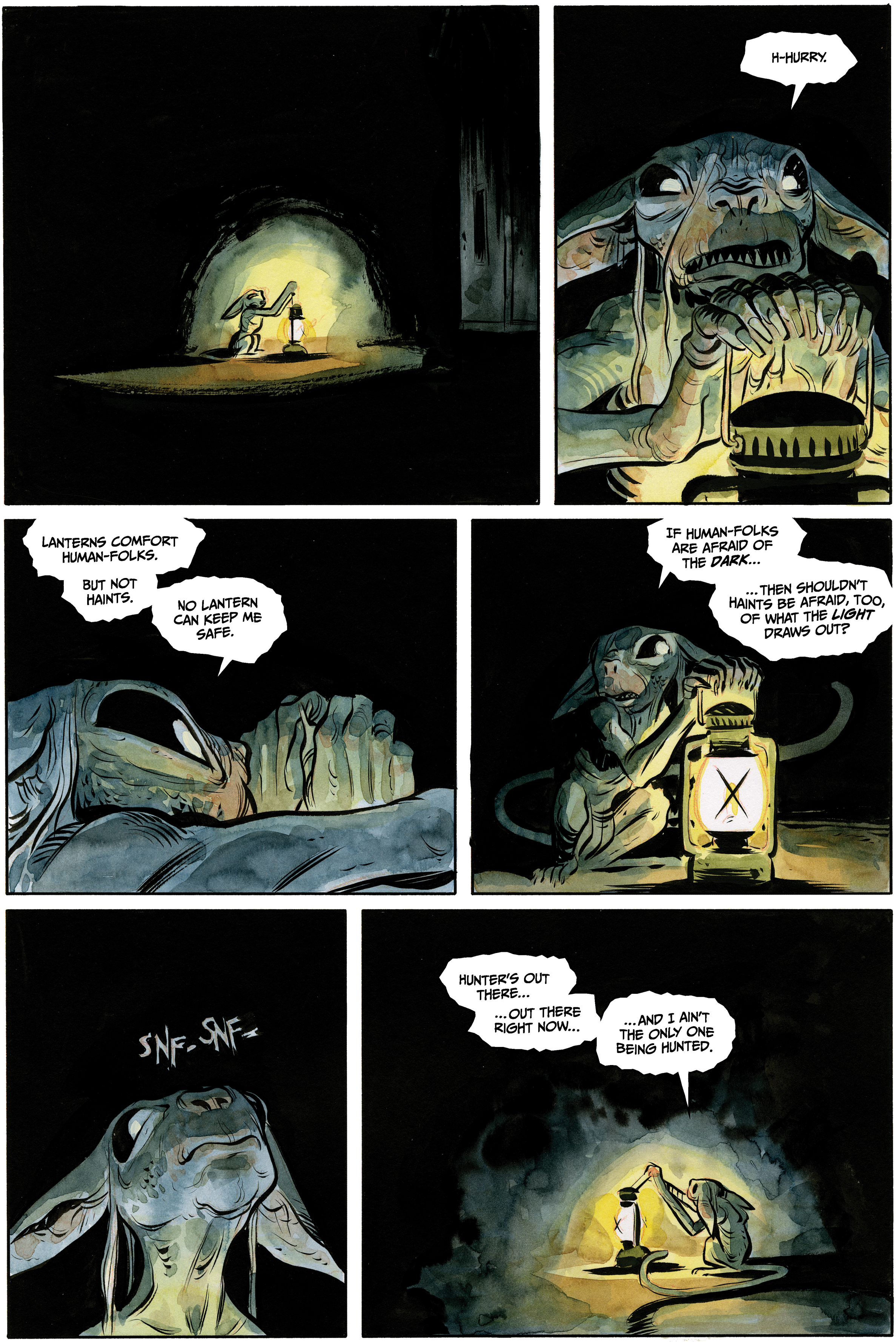

...A SHADOW WAS SOMETHING MORE.
HELLO?
IS *SOMEONE* IN HERE?
EMMY HAD A GREAT POWER...
SHAKY?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?
...AN INFLUENCE OVER THE WORLD AROUND HER.
MROOOO!
YOU MIGHT THINK SUCH TALENTS WOULD MAKE HER FEARLESS.
YOU'RE *TREMBLING!* YOU'RE REALLY LIVING UP TO YOUR NAME, AREN'T YOU?
BUT THERE AIN'T NO SUCH THING...
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?
WHY'RE YOU SO--
...NOT AMONG REGULAR FOLK, HAINTS, OR EVEN WITCHES...
--SPOOKED?
...NOT WHEN THE WORLD ITSELF IS STILL FULL OF THEM THINGS THAT CAN CATCH YOU *UNAWARE*.

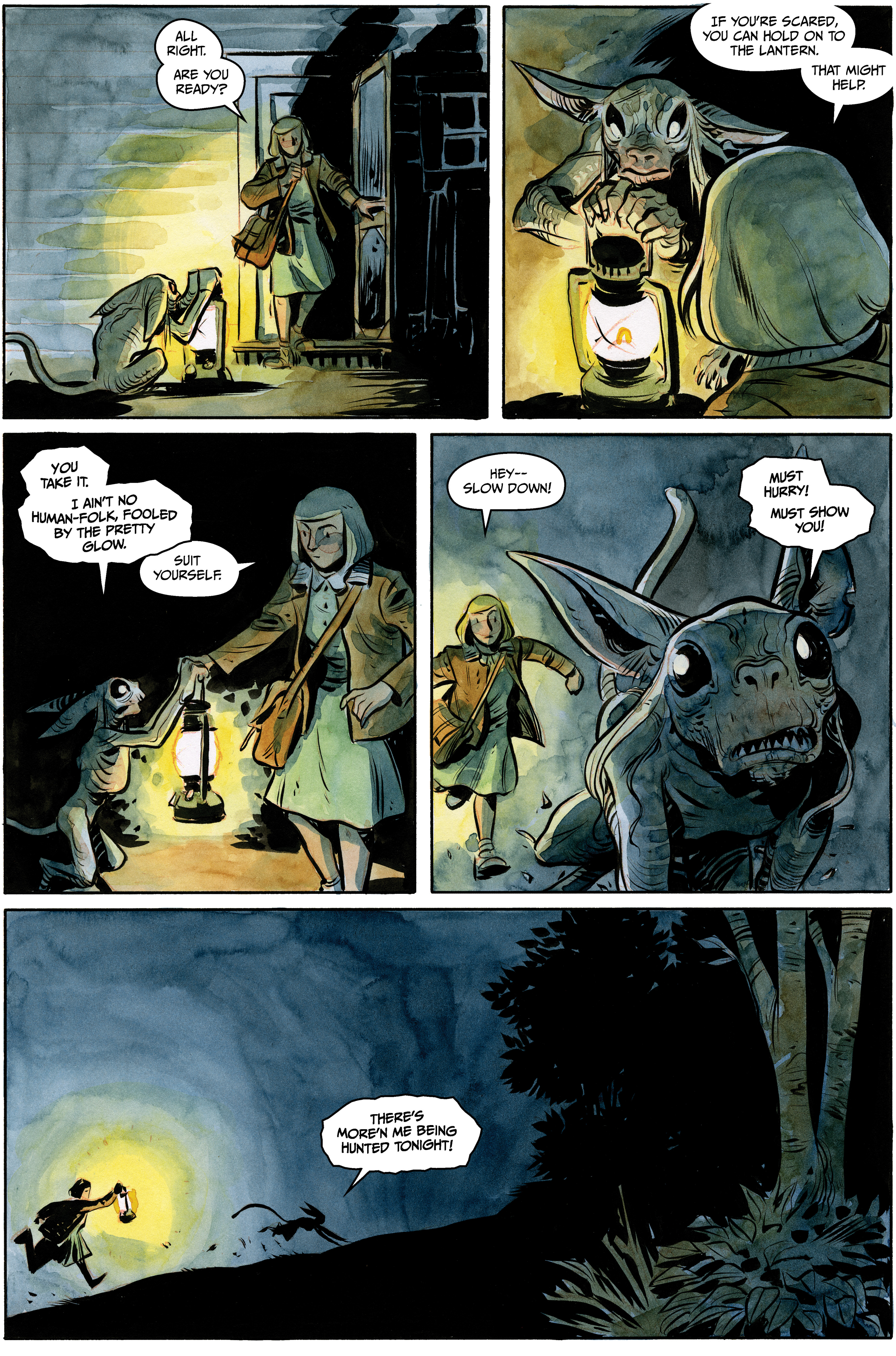

MAAROOOooo
QUIET NOW.
LET ME SUSS THIS OUT IN PEACE.
IS THERE SOMEONE ELSE IN HERE WITH US?
IF THERE IS, COME ON OUT AND SHOW YOURSELF.
Harrow COUNTY
Harrow COUNTY
CRRRK-CLK-CRKT

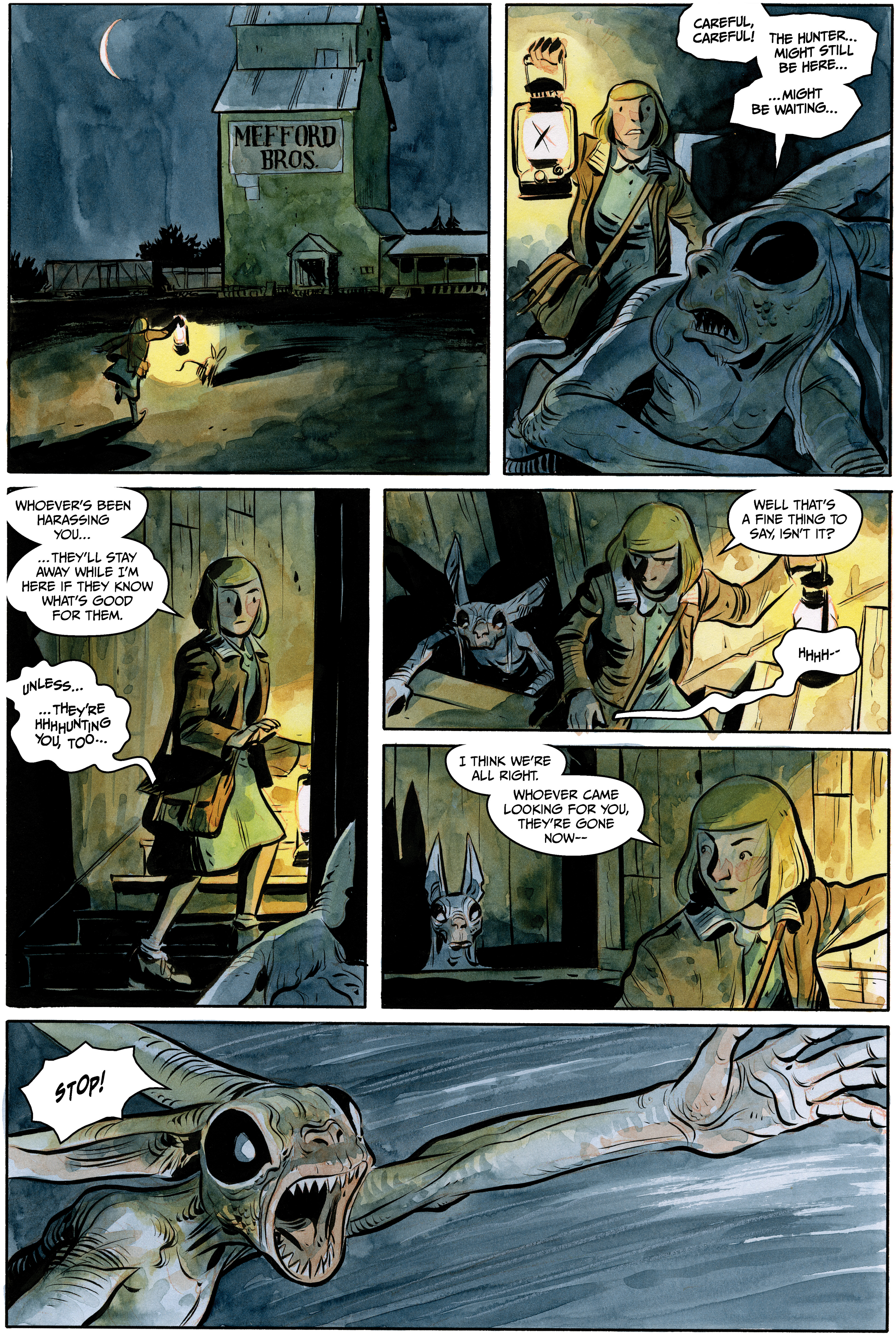

PRISCILLA?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP THERE?
SEEMS LIKE NEAR ABOUT EVERY TIME I SEE YOU, YOU'RE SKULKING ABOUT IN THE RAFTERS.
HRRF
HRRF
COME ON DOWN NOW.
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE *SCARED*, TOO.
COME DOWN HERE.
I WON'T LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO YOU.

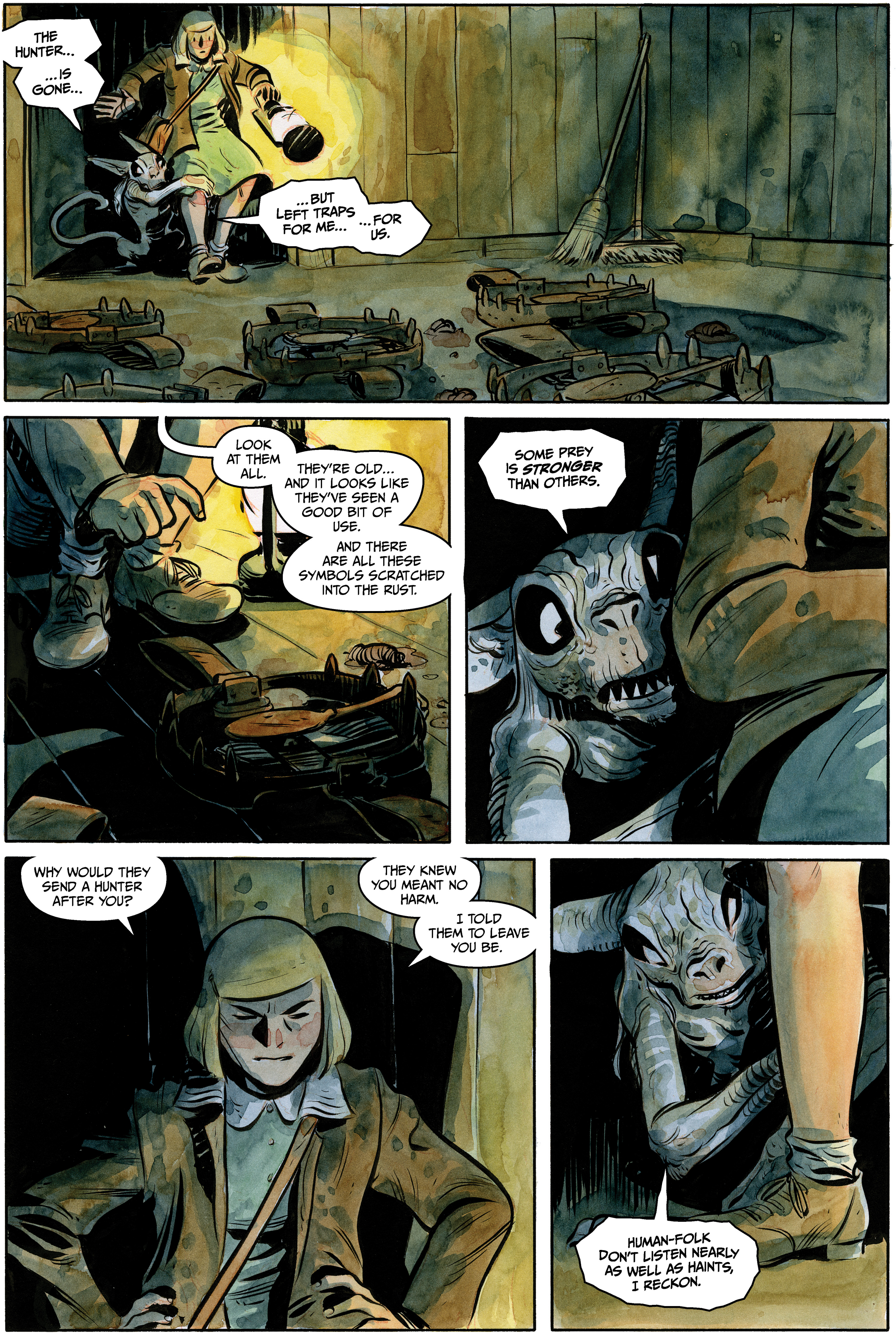

IT AIN'T SAFE.
AIN'T SAFE TO COME OUT OF HIDING.
TOO LATE FOR THAT NOW, I RECKON.
YOU MUST'VE COME HERE FOR A REASON.
IF YOU WANTED TO HIDE, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE LEFT THE GRAIN ELEVATOR.
NO.
NOT SAFE THERE, NEITHER.
THE HUMAN-FOLK...
...THEY STILL WANT TO RUN ME OFF.
WHEN YOU WOULDN'T DO IT FOR THEM, THEY FOUND SOMEONE ELSE.
A HUNTER.
SHOW ME.

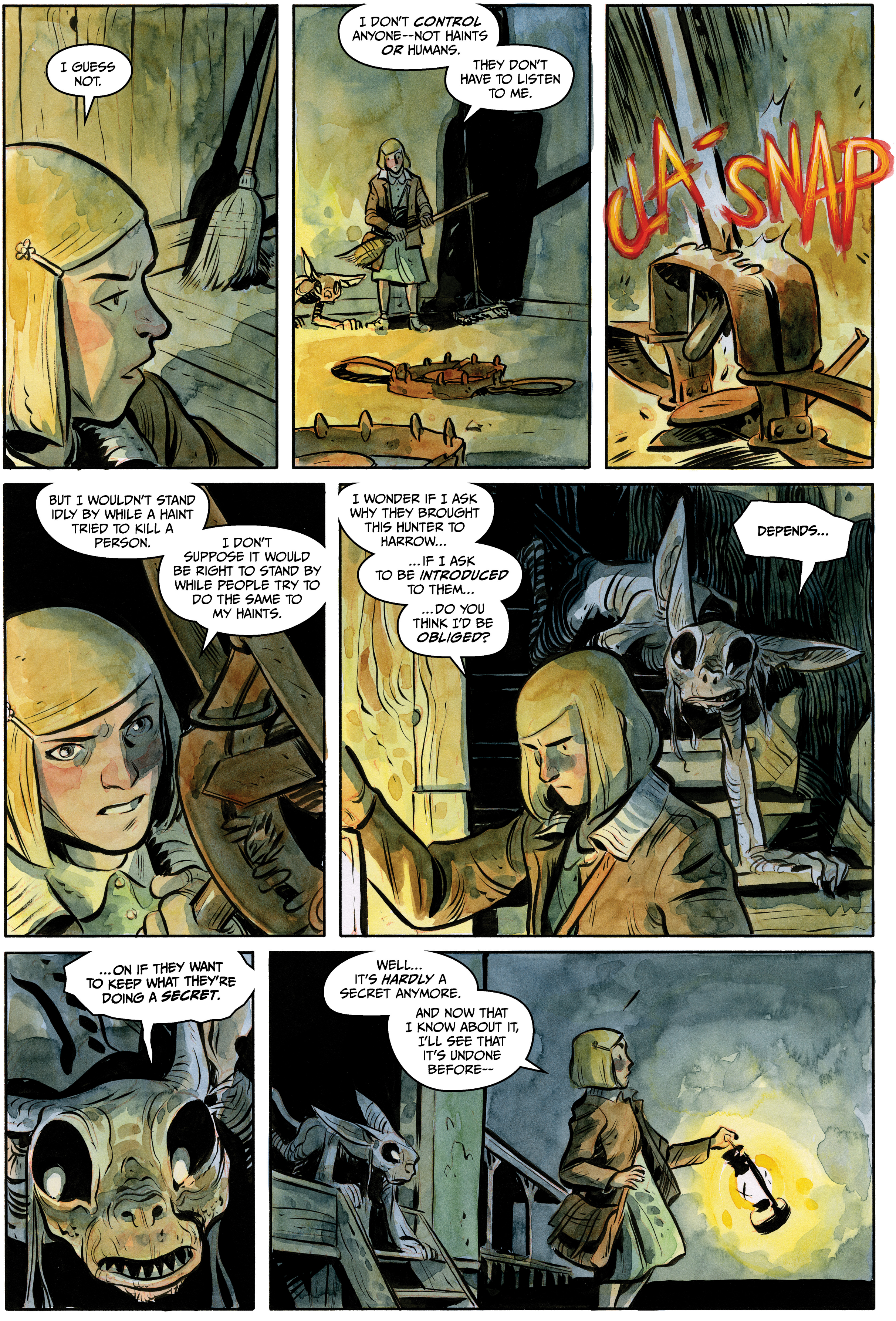

CAN YOU HOLD THIS FOR ME?
CAREFUL NOW.
THE GLASS CAN GET HOT.
JUST WAIT RIGHT HERE, ALL RIGHT?
I NEED SOME THINGS FROM INSIDE.
H-HURRY.
DON'T LIKE BEING ALONE... NOT OUT HERE IN THE OPEN.
DON'T WORRY.
YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
I WON'T BE LONG.

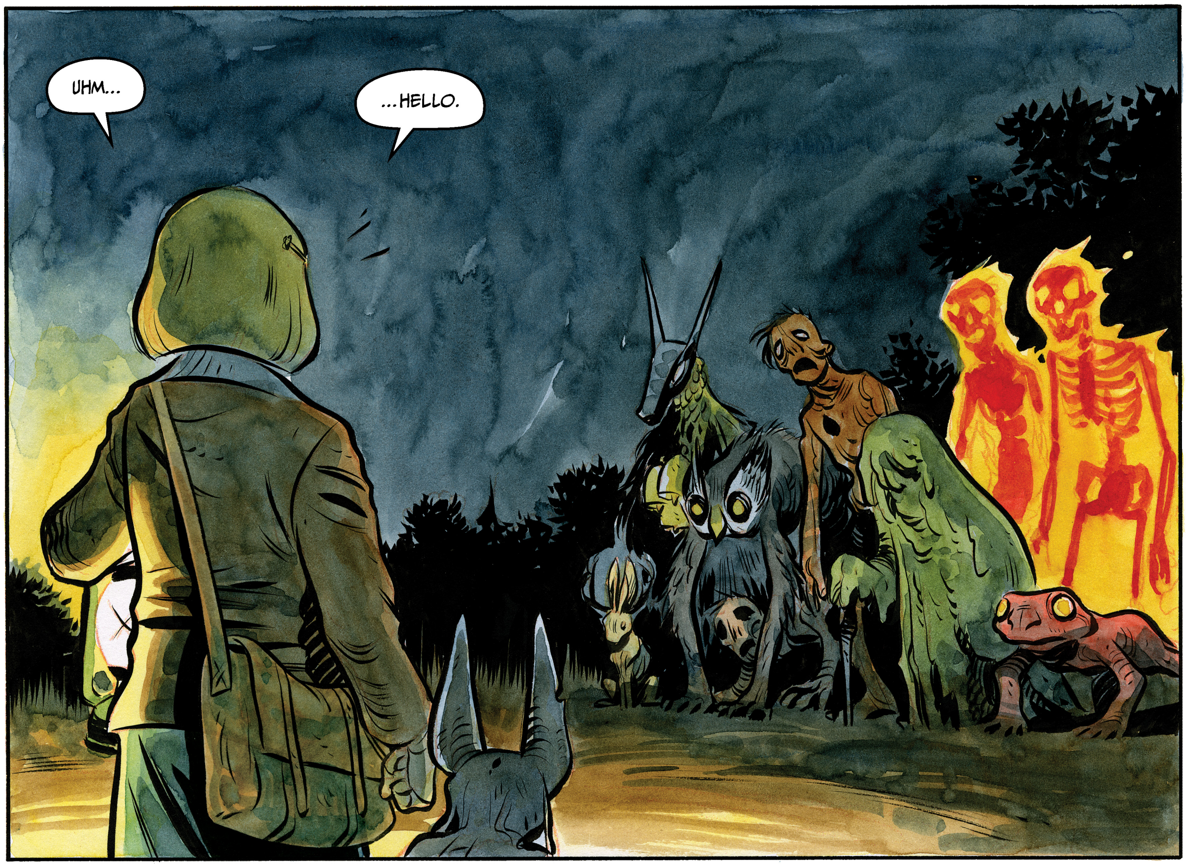

H-HURRY.
LANTERNS COMFORT HUMAN-FOLKS.
BUT NOT HAINTS.
NO LANTERN CAN KEEP ME SAFE.
IF HUMAN-FOLKS ARE AFRAID OF THE *DARK*...
...THEN SHOULDN'T HAINTS BE AFRAID, TOO, OF WHAT THE *LIGHT* DRAWS OUT?
SNF-SNF-
HUNTER'S OUT THERE...
...OUT THERE RIGHT NOW...
...AND I AIN'T THE ONLY ONE BEING HUNTED.

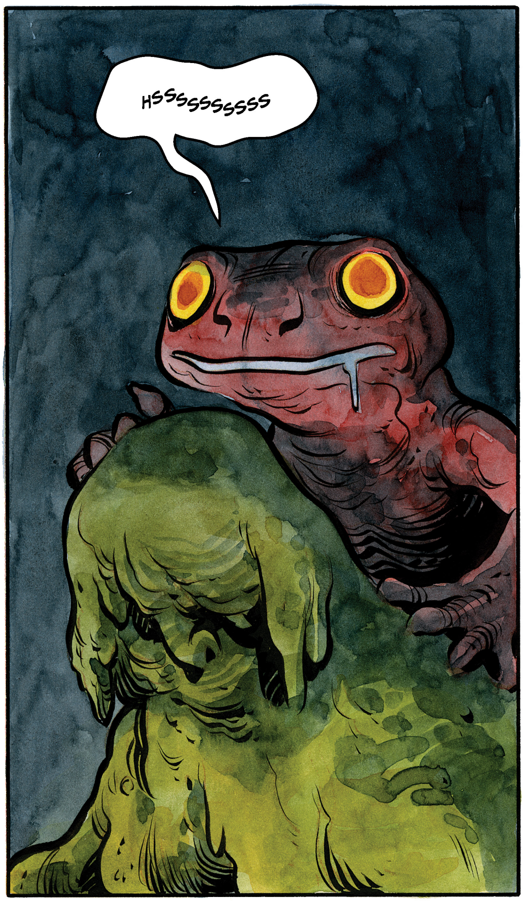

ALL RIGHT.
ARE YOU READY?
IF YOU'RE SCARED, YOU CAN HOLD ON TO THE LANTERN.
THAT MIGHT HELP.
YOU TAKE IT.
I AIN'T NO HUMAN-FOLK, FOOLED BY THE PRETTY GLOW.
SUIT YOURSELF.
HEY-- SLOW DOWN!
MUST HURRY!
MUST SHOW YOU!
THERE'S MORE'N ME BEING HUNTED TONIGHT!

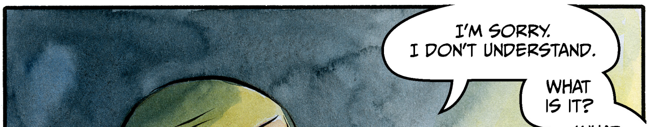

MEFFORD BROS.
CAREFUL, CAREFUL!
THE HUNTER... MIGHT STILL BE HERE...
...MIGHT BE WAITING...
WHOEVER'S BEEN HARASSING YOU...
...THEY'LL STAY AWAY WHILE I'M HERE IF THEY KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR THEM.
UNLESS...
...THEY'RE HHHHUNTING YOU, TOO...
WELL THAT'S A FINE THING TO SAY, ISN'T IT?
HHHH--
I THINK WE'RE ALL RIGHT.
WHOEVER CAME LOOKING FOR YOU, THEY'RE GONE NOW--
STOP!

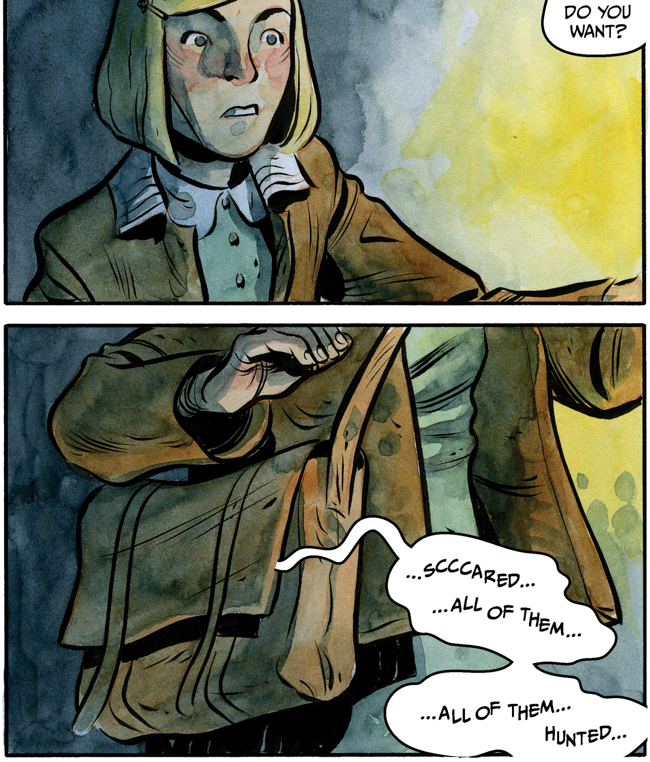

THE HUNTER... ...IS GONE...
...BUT LEFT TRAPS FOR ME... ...FOR US.
LOOK AT THEM ALL.
THEY'RE OLD... AND IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE SEEN A GOOD BIT OF USE.
AND THERE ARE ALL THESE SYMBOLS SCRATCHED INTO THE RUST.
SOME PREY IS ***STRONGER*** THAN OTHERS.
WHY WOULD THEY SEND A HUNTER AFTER YOU?
THEY KNEW YOU MEANT NO HARM.
I TOLD THEM TO LEAVE YOU BE.
HUMAN-FOLK DON'T LISTEN NEARLY AS WELL AS HAINTS, I RECKON.

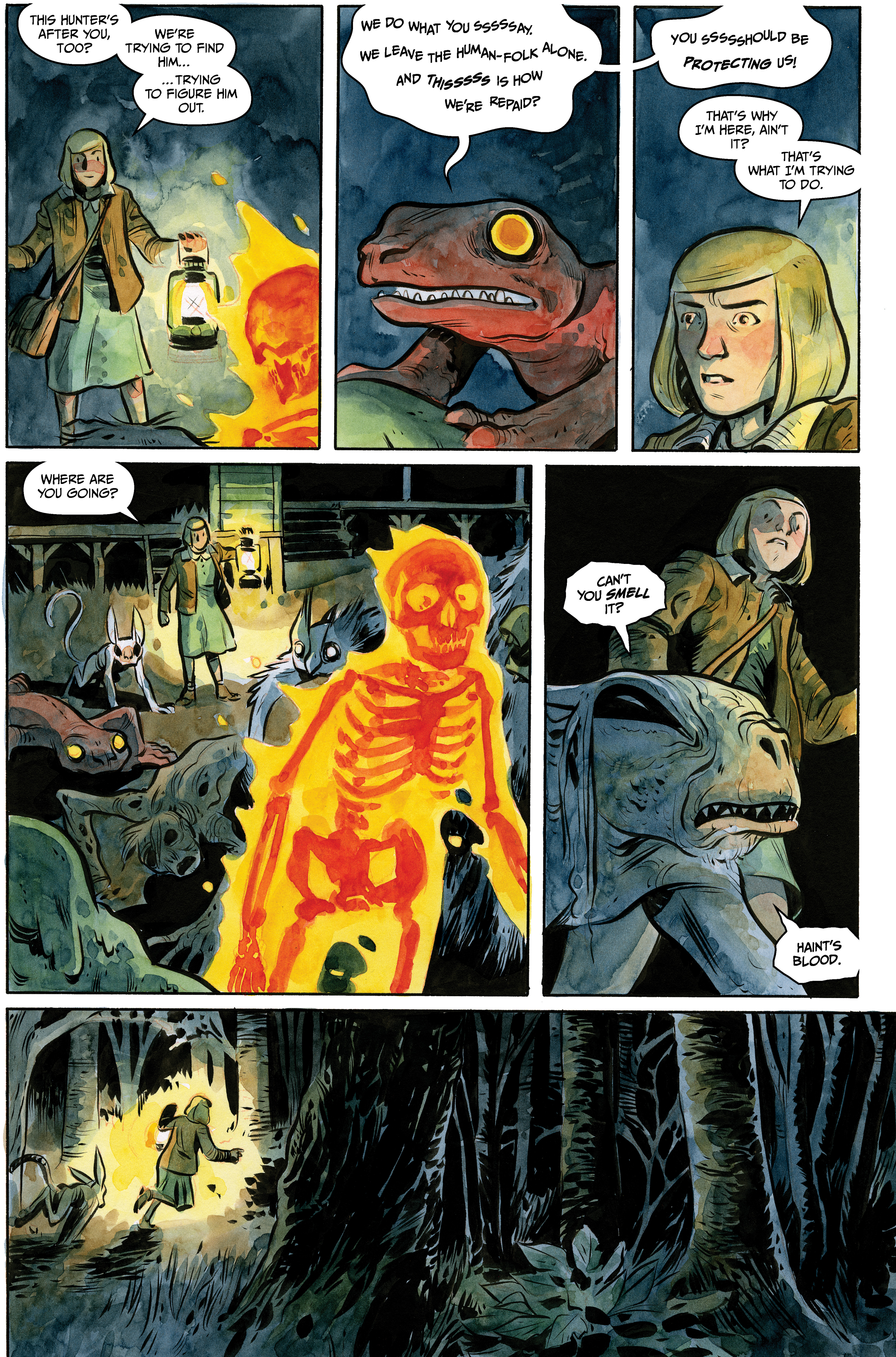

I GUESS NOT.
I DON'T *CONTROL* ANYONE--NOT HAINTS *OR* HUMANS.
THEY DON'T HAVE TO LISTEN TO ME.
JA-SNAP
BUT I WOULDN'T STAND IDLY BY WHILE A HAINT TRIED TO KILL A PERSON.
I DON'T SUPPOSE IT WOULD BE RIGHT TO STAND BY WHILE PEOPLE TRY TO DO THE SAME TO MY HAINTS.
I WONDER IF I ASK WHY THEY BROUGHT THIS HUNTER TO HARROW...
...IF I ASK TO BE *INTRODUCED* TO THEM...
...DO YOU THINK I'D BE *OBLIGED?*
DEPENDS...
...ON IF THEY WANT TO KEEP WHAT THEY'RE DOING A *SECRET.*
WELL... IT'S *HARDLY* A SECRET ANYMORE.
AND NOW THAT I KNOW ABOUT IT, I'LL SEE THAT IT'S UNDONE BEFORE--

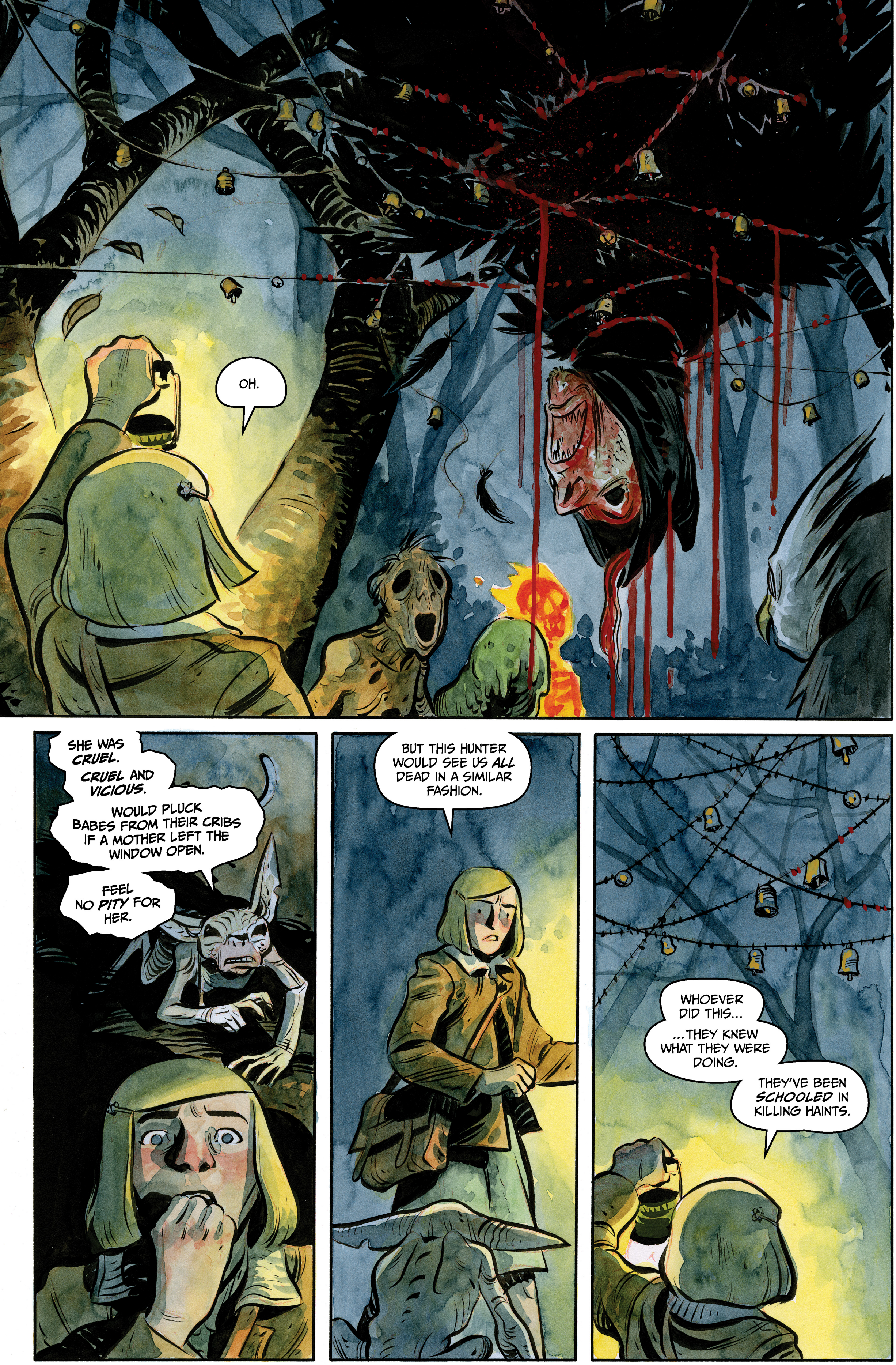

UHM...
...HELLO.

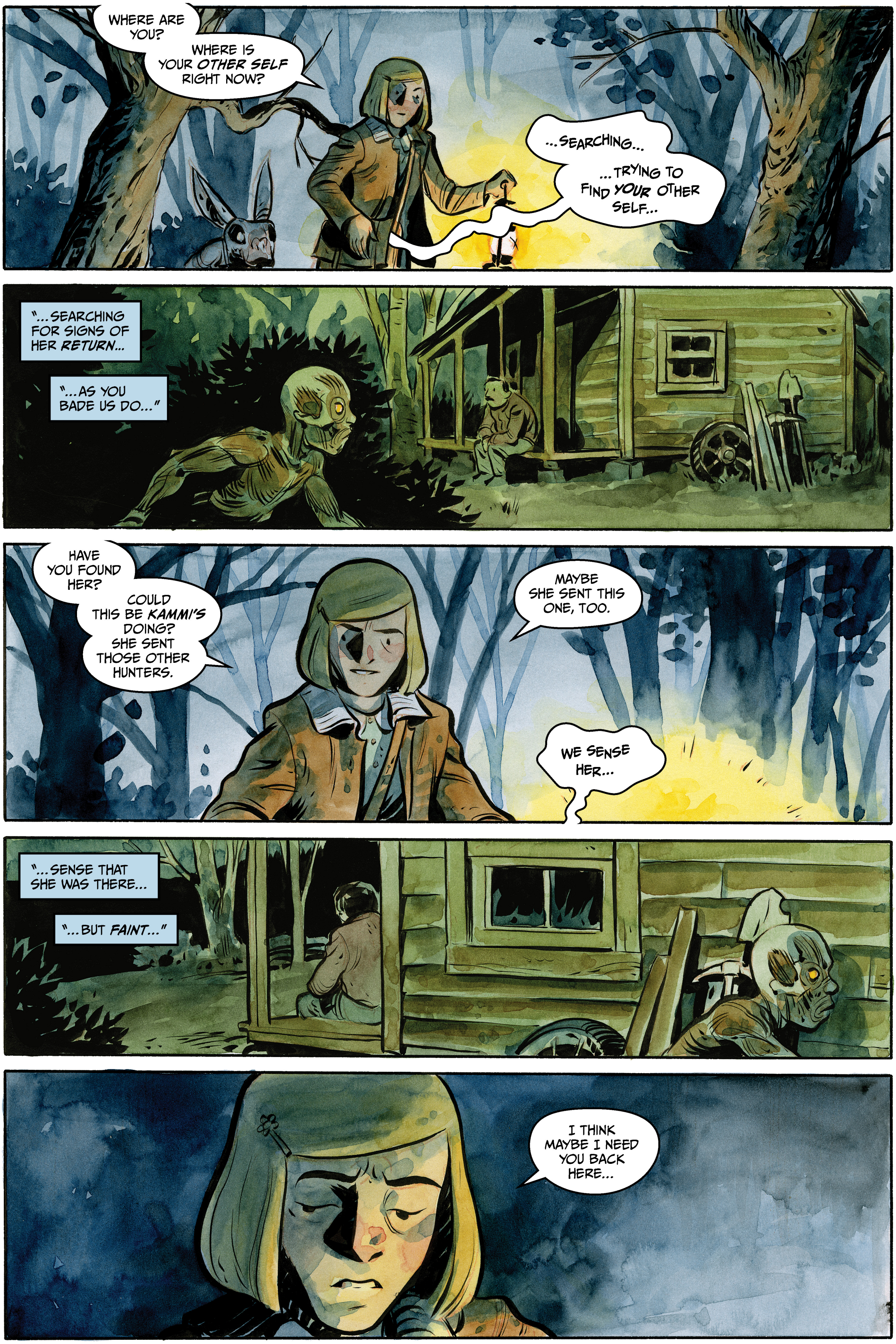

HSSSSSSSSSS

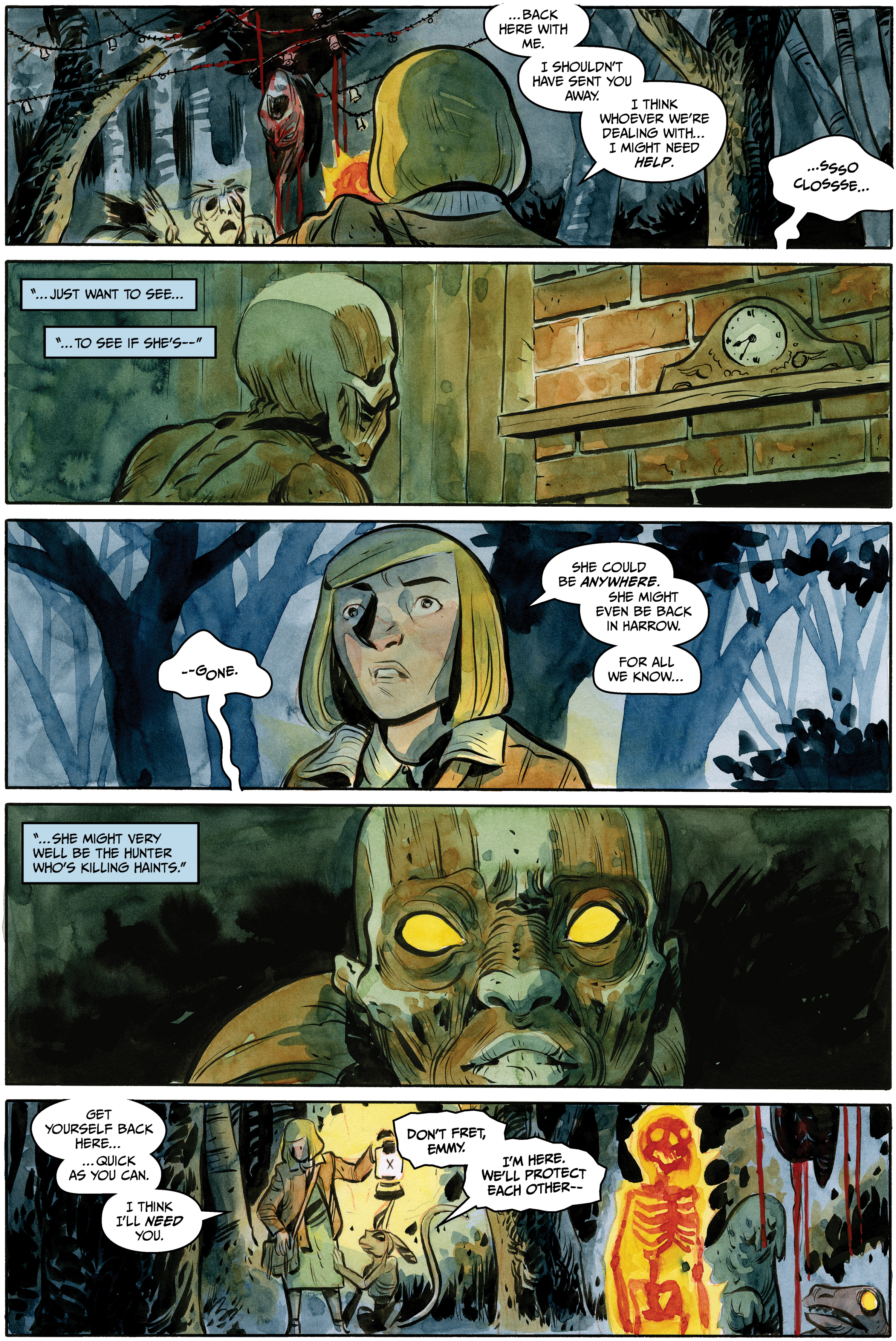

I'M SORRY. I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
WHAT IS IT?
WHAT DO YOU WANT?

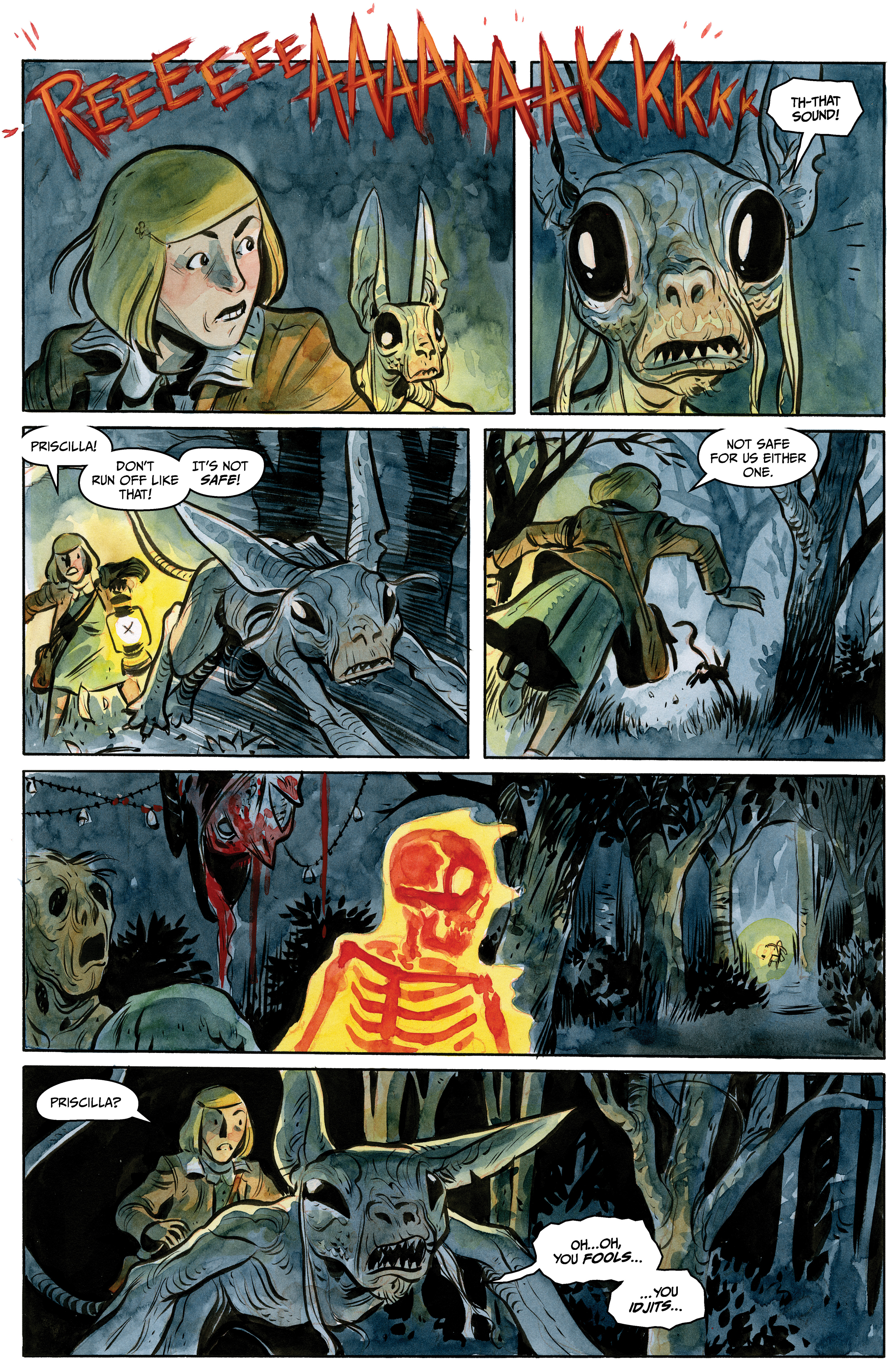

...SCCCARED...
...ALL OF THEM...
...ALL OF THEM... HUNTED...

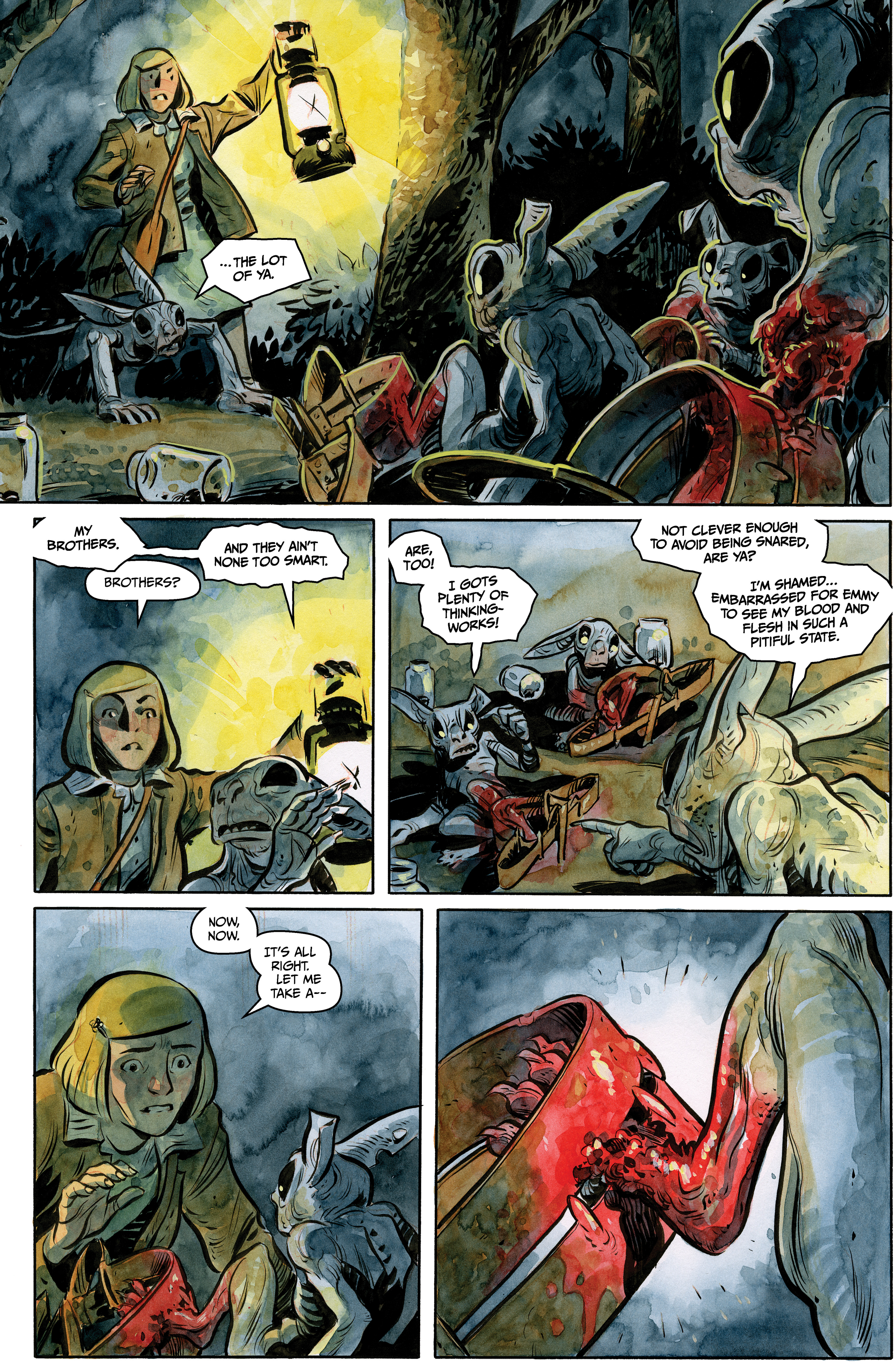

THIS HUNTER'S AFTER YOU, TOO?
WE'RE TRYING TO FIND HIM...
...TRYING TO FIGURE HIM OUT.
WE DO WHAT YOU SSSSSAY. WE LEAVE THE HUMAN-FOLK ALONE. AND THISSSSS IS HOW WE'RE REPAID?
YOU SSSSSHOULD BE PROTECTING US!
THAT'S WHY I'M HERE, AIN'T IT?
THAT'S WHAT I'M TRYING TO DO.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
CAN'T YOU SMELL IT?
HAINT'S BLOOD.

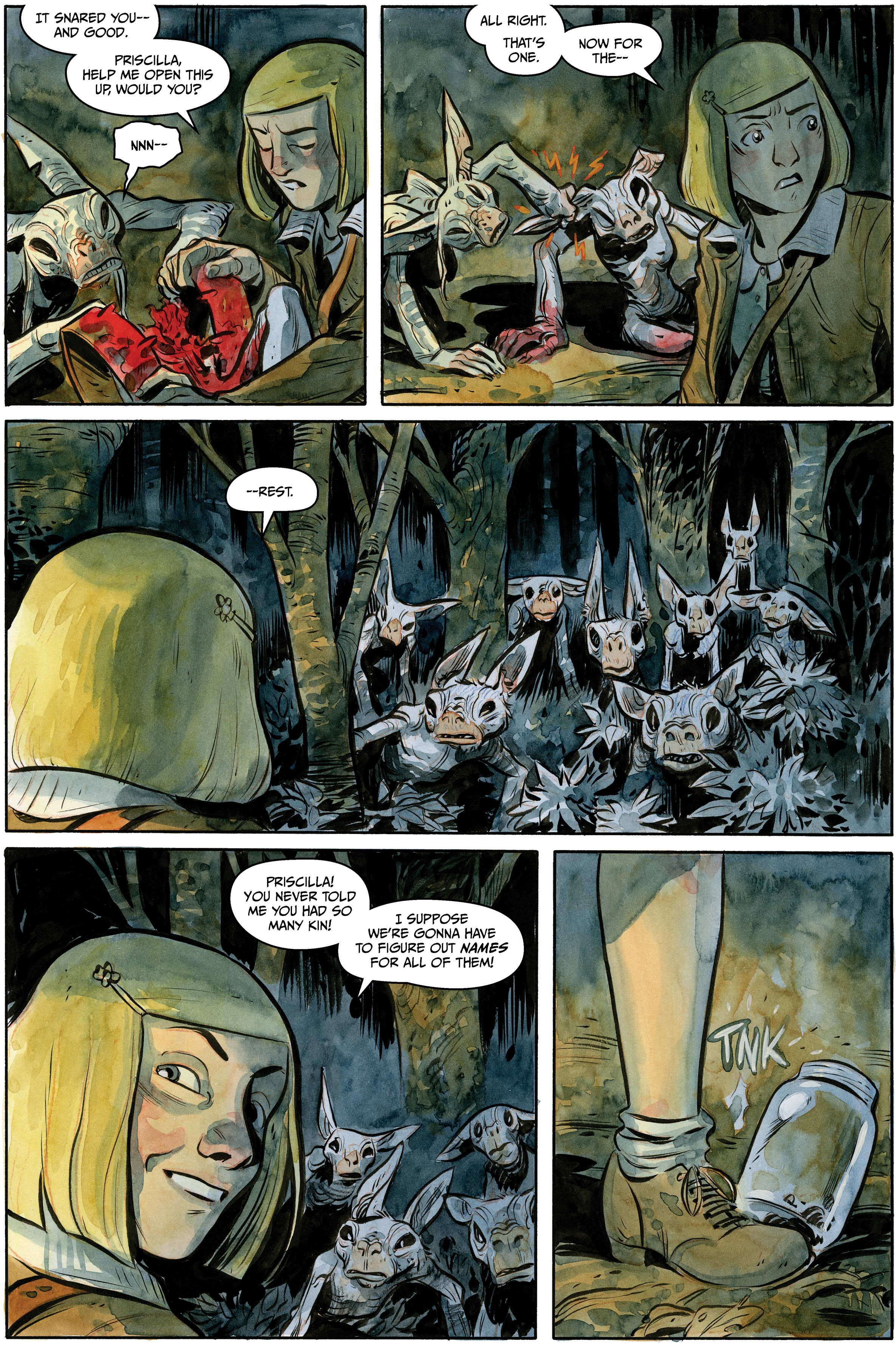

OH.
SHE WAS *CRUEL*.
CRUEL AND *VICIOUS*.
WOULD PLUCK BABES FROM THEIR CRIBS IF A MOTHER LEFT THE WINDOW OPEN.
FEEL NO *PITY* FOR HER.
BUT THIS HUNTER WOULD SEE US *ALL* DEAD IN A SIMILAR FASHION.
WHOEVER DID THIS...
...THEY KNEW WHAT THEY WERE DOING.
THEY'VE BEEN *SCHOOLED* IN KILLING HAINTS.

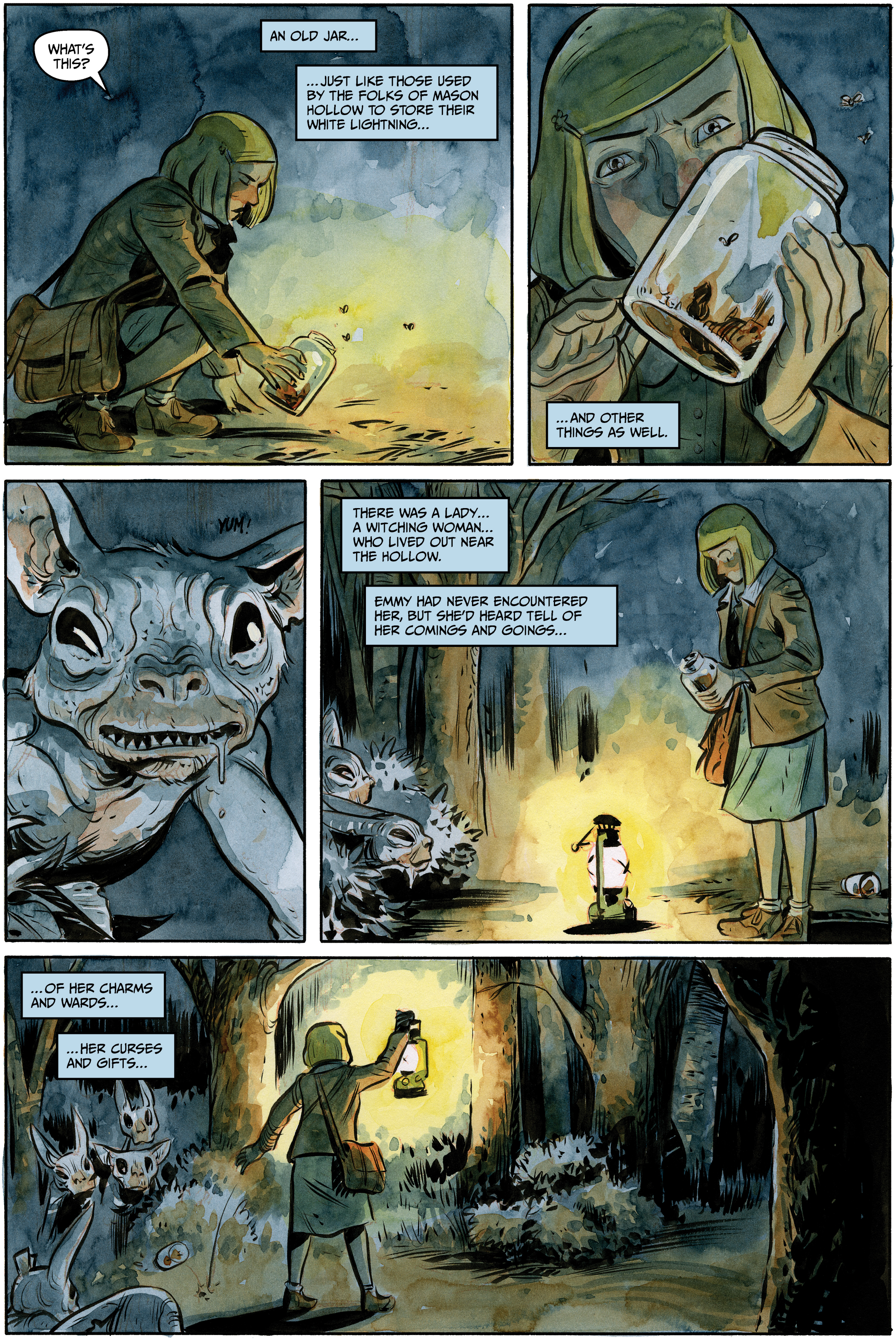

WHERE ARE YOU?
WHERE IS YOUR *OTHER SELF* RIGHT NOW?
...SEARCHING...
...TRYING TO FIND ***YOUR*** OTHER SELF...
"...SEARCHING FOR SIGNS OF HER *RETURN*...
"...AS YOU BADE US DO..."
HAVE YOU FOUND HER?
COULD THIS BE *KAMMI'S* DOING? SHE SENT THOSE OTHER HUNTERS.
MAYBE SHE SENT THIS ONE, TOO.
WE SENSE HER...
"...SENSE THAT SHE WAS THERE...
"...BUT *FAINT*..."
I THINK MAYBE I NEED YOU BACK HERE...

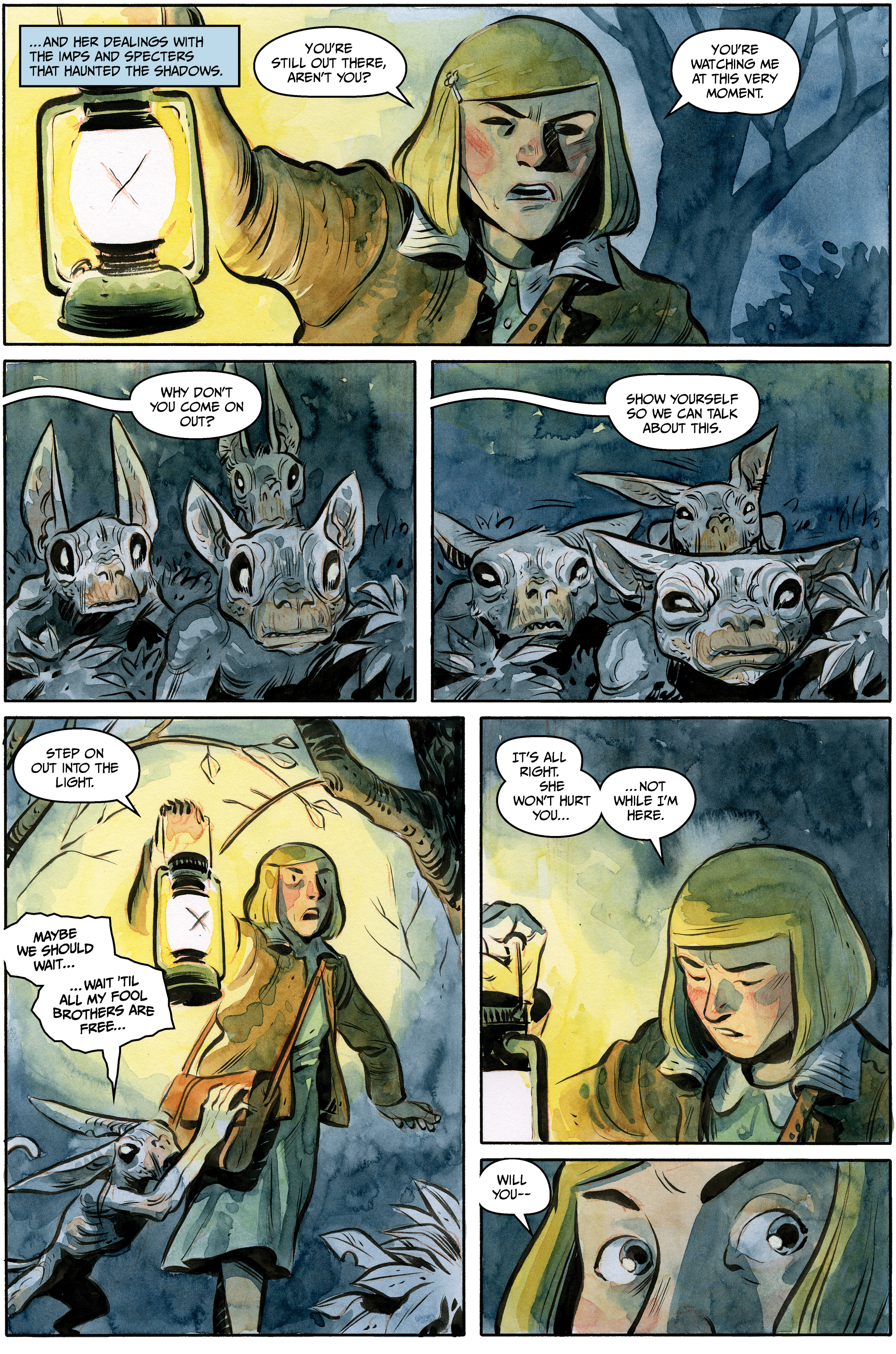

...BACK HERE WITH ME.
I SHOULDN'T HAVE SENT YOU AWAY.
I THINK WHOEVER WE'RE DEALING WITH... I MIGHT NEED *HELP*.
...SSSO CLOSSSE...
"...JUST WANT TO SEE...
"...TO SEE IF SHE'S--"
SHE COULD BE *ANYWHERE*. SHE MIGHT EVEN BE BACK IN HARROW.
FOR ALL WE KNOW...
--GONE.
"...SHE MIGHT VERY WELL BE THE HUNTER WHO'S KILLING HAINTS."
GET YOURSELF BACK HERE... ...QUICK AS YOU CAN.
I THINK I'LL *NEED* YOU.
DON'T FRET, EMMY.
I'M HERE. WE'LL PROTECT EACH OTHER--

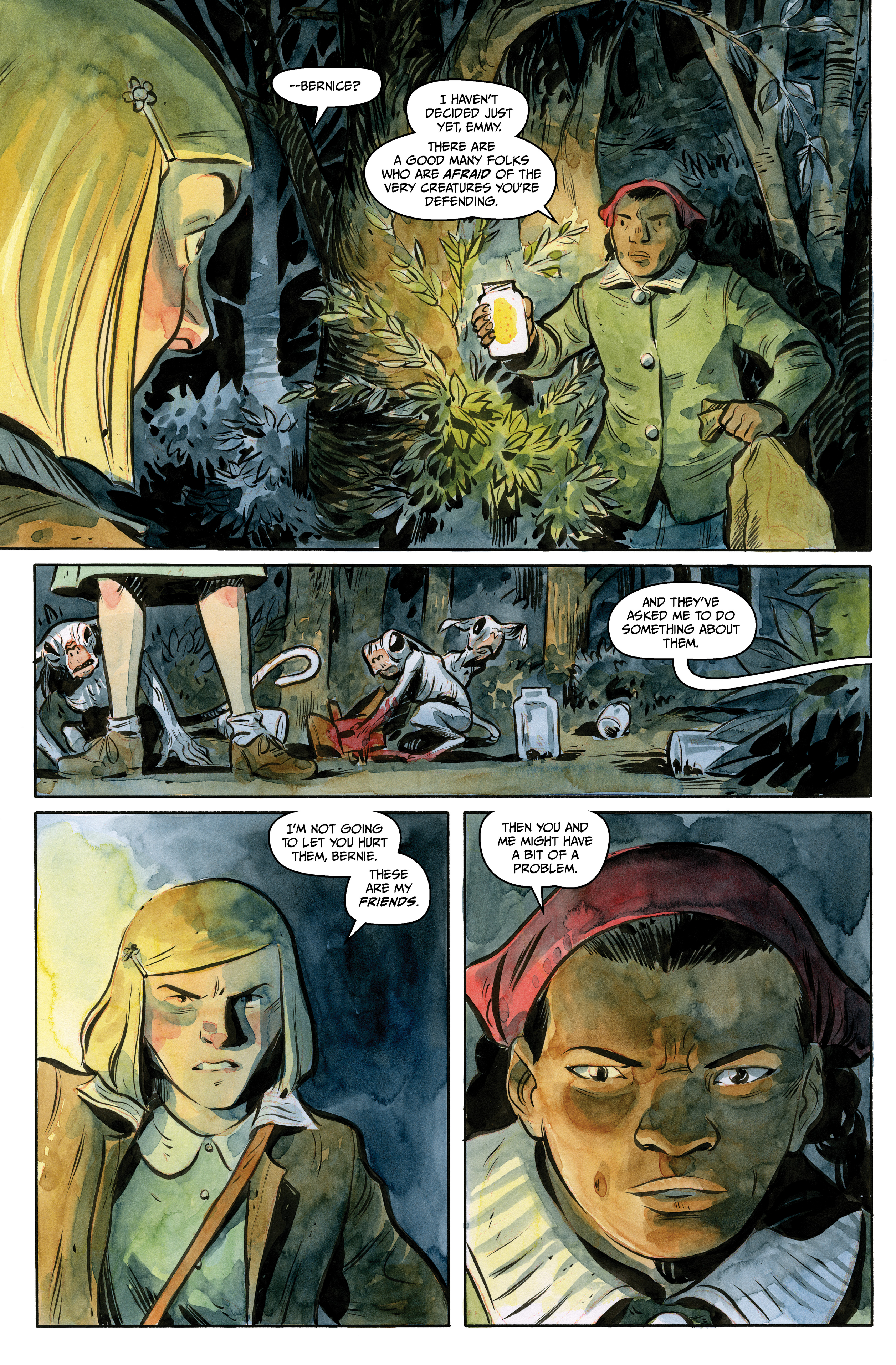

REEEEEEEAAAAAAAAKKKKK
TH-THAT SOUND!
PRISCILLA!
DON'T RUN OFF LIKE THAT!
IT'S NOT *SAFE*!
NOT SAFE FOR US EITHER ONE.
PRISCILLA?
OH...OH, YOU *FOOLS*...
...YOU *IDJITS*...


...THE LOT OF YA.
MY BROTHERS.
BROTHERS?
AND THEY AIN'T NONE TOO SMART.
ARE, TOO!
I GOTS PLENTY OF THINKING-WORKS!
NOT CLEVER ENOUGH TO AVOID BEING SNARED, ARE YA?
I'M SHAMED... EMBARRASSED FOR EMMY TO SEE MY BLOOD AND FLESH IN SUCH A PITIFUL STATE.
NOW, NOW.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. LET ME TAKE A--

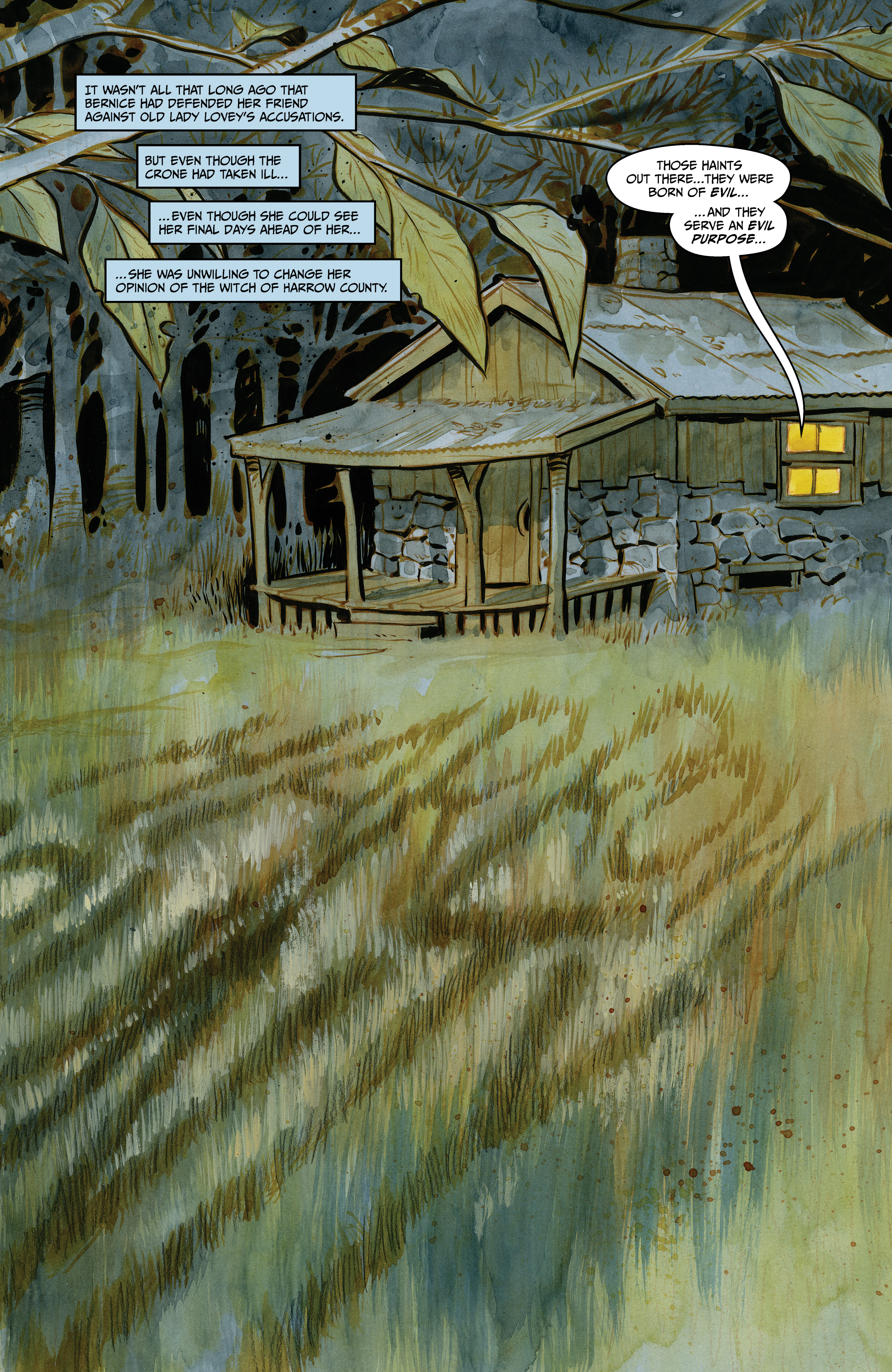

IT SNARED YOU-- AND GOOD.
PRISCILLA, HELP ME OPEN THIS UP, WOULD YOU?
NNN--
ALL RIGHT.
THAT'S ONE.
NOW FOR THE--
--REST.
PRISCILLA! YOU NEVER TOLD ME YOU HAD SO MANY KIN!
I SUPPOSE WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO FIGURE OUT *NAMES* FOR ALL OF THEM!
TNK

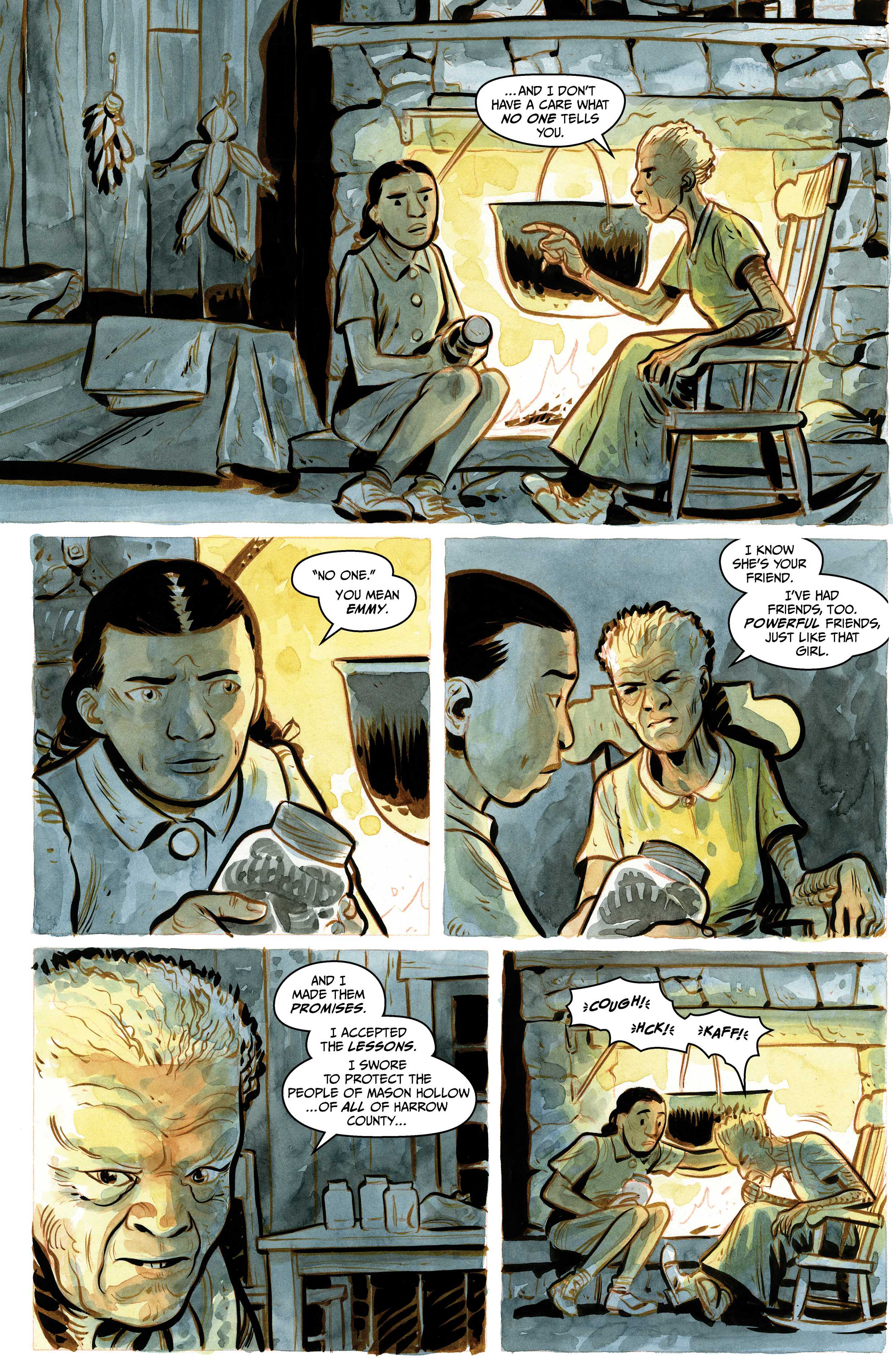

AN OLD JAR...
WHAT'S THIS?
...JUST LIKE THOSE USED BY THE FOLKS OF MASON HOLLOW TO STORE THEIR WHITE LIGHTNING...
...AND OTHER THINGS AS WELL.
YUM!
THERE WAS A LADY... A WITCHING WOMAN... WHO LIVED OUT NEAR THE HOLLOW.
EMMY HAD NEVER ENCOUNTERED HER, BUT SHE'D HEARD TELL OF HER COMINGS AND GOINGS...
...OF HER CHARMS AND WARDS...
...HER CURSES AND GIFTS...

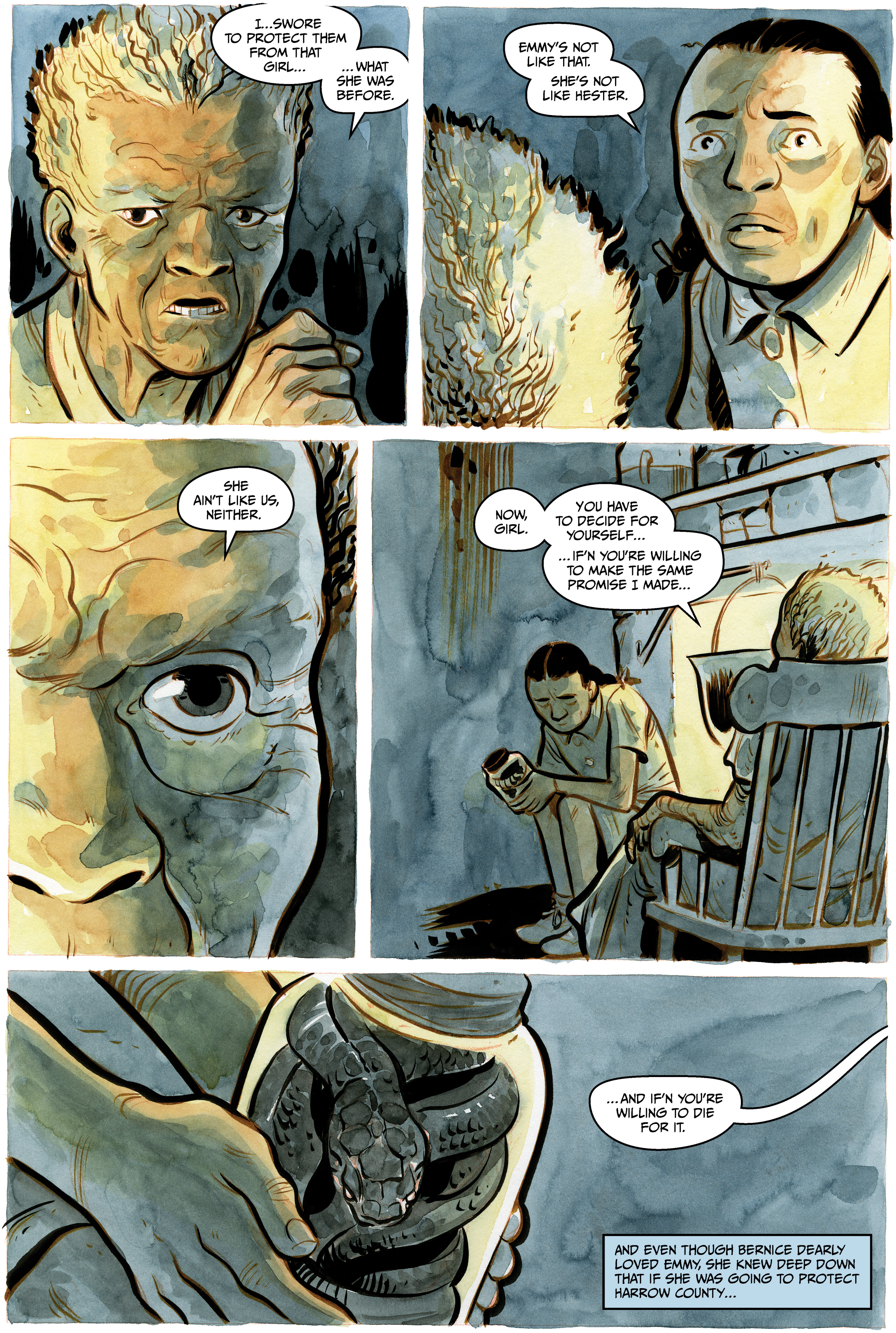

...AND HER DEALINGS WITH THE IMPS AND SPECTERS THAT HAUNTED THE SHADOWS.
YOU'RE STILL OUT THERE, AREN'T YOU?
YOU'RE WATCHING ME AT THIS VERY MOMENT.
WHY DON'T YOU COME ON OUT?
SHOW YOURSELF SO WE CAN TALK ABOUT THIS.
STEP ON OUT INTO THE LIGHT.
MAYBE WE SHOULD WAIT...
...WAIT 'TIL ALL MY FOOL BROTHERS ARE FREE...
IT'S ALL RIGHT. SHE WON'T HURT YOU...
...NOT WHILE I'M HERE.
WILL YOU--

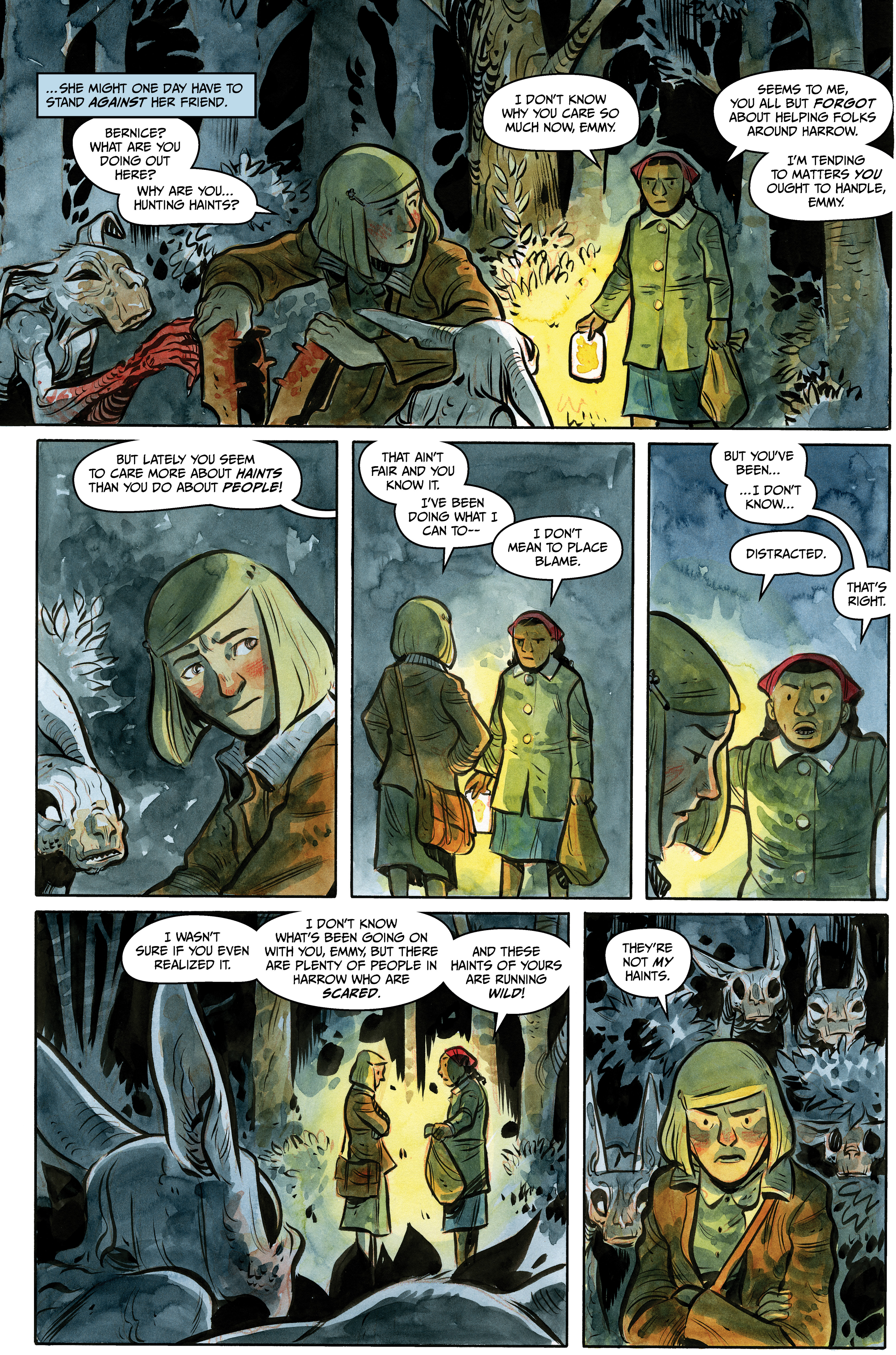

--BERNICE?
I HAVEN'T DECIDED JUST YET, EMMY.
THERE ARE A GOOD MANY FOLKS WHO ARE *AFRAID* OF THE VERY CREATURES YOU'RE DEFENDING.
AND THEY'VE ASKED ME TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THEM.
I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU HURT THEM, BERNIE.
THESE ARE MY *FRIENDS*.
THEN YOU AND ME MIGHT HAVE A BIT OF A PROBLEM.

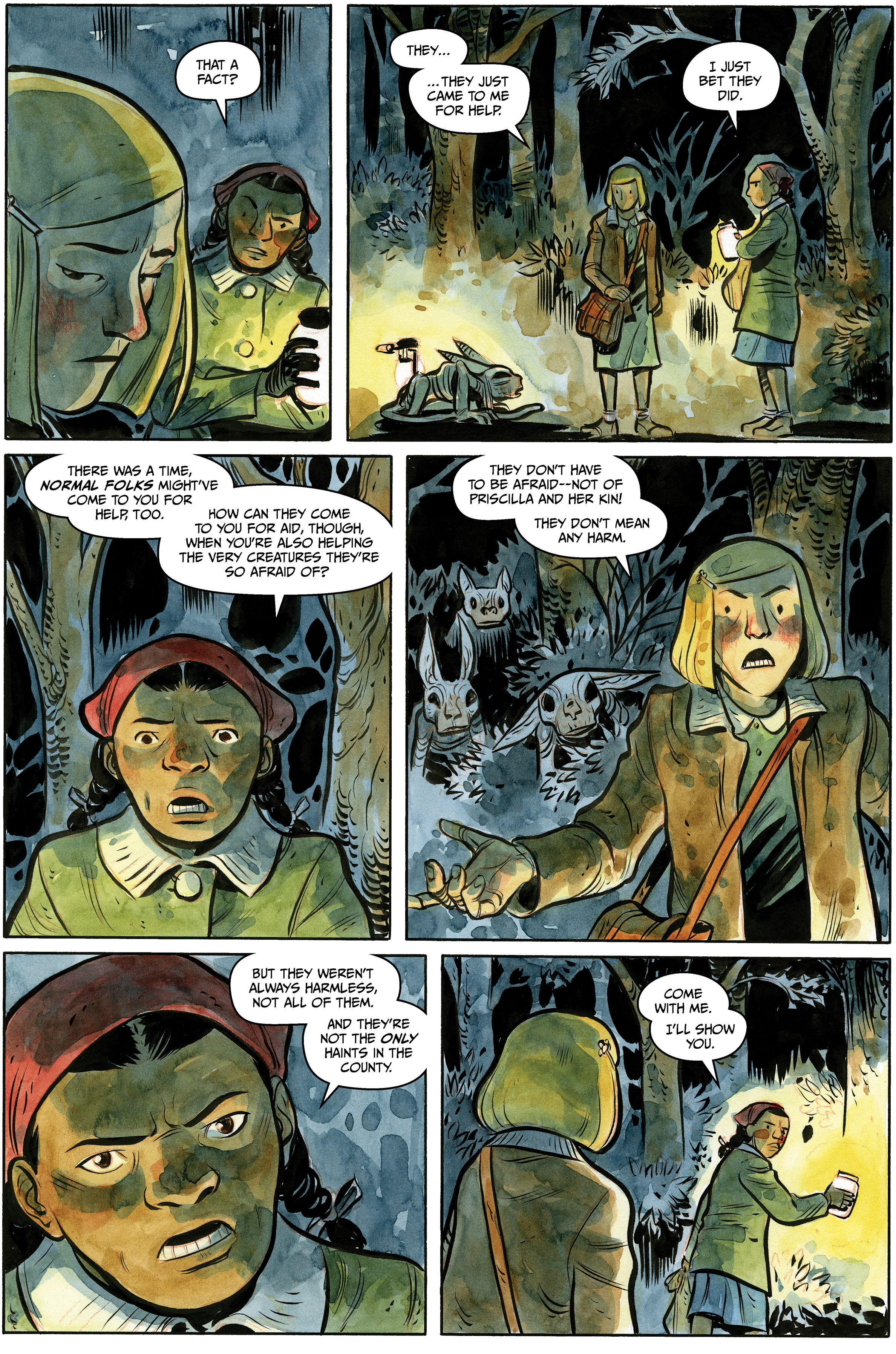
TWO

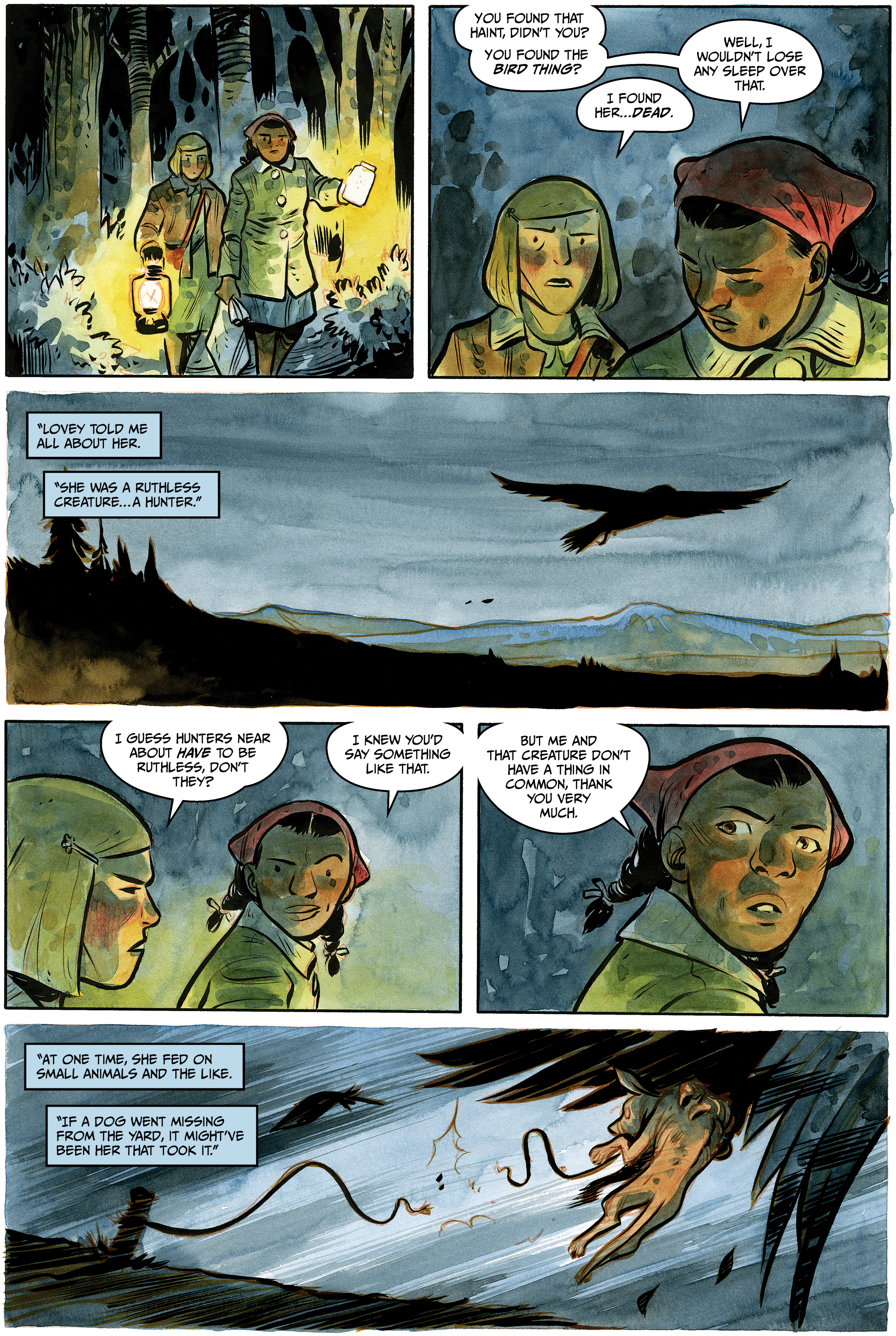

IT WASN'T ALL THAT LONG AGO THAT BERNICE HAD DEFENDED HER FRIEND AGAINST OLD LADY LOVEY'S ACCUSATIONS.
BUT EVEN THOUGH THE CRONE HAD TAKEN ILL...
...EVEN THOUGH SHE COULD SEE HER FINAL DAYS AHEAD OF HER...
...SHE WAS UNWILLING TO CHANGE HER OPINION OF THE WITCH OF HARROW COUNTY.
THOSE HAINTS OUT THERE...THEY WERE BORN OF *EVIL*...
...AND THEY SERVE AN *EVIL PURPOSE*...

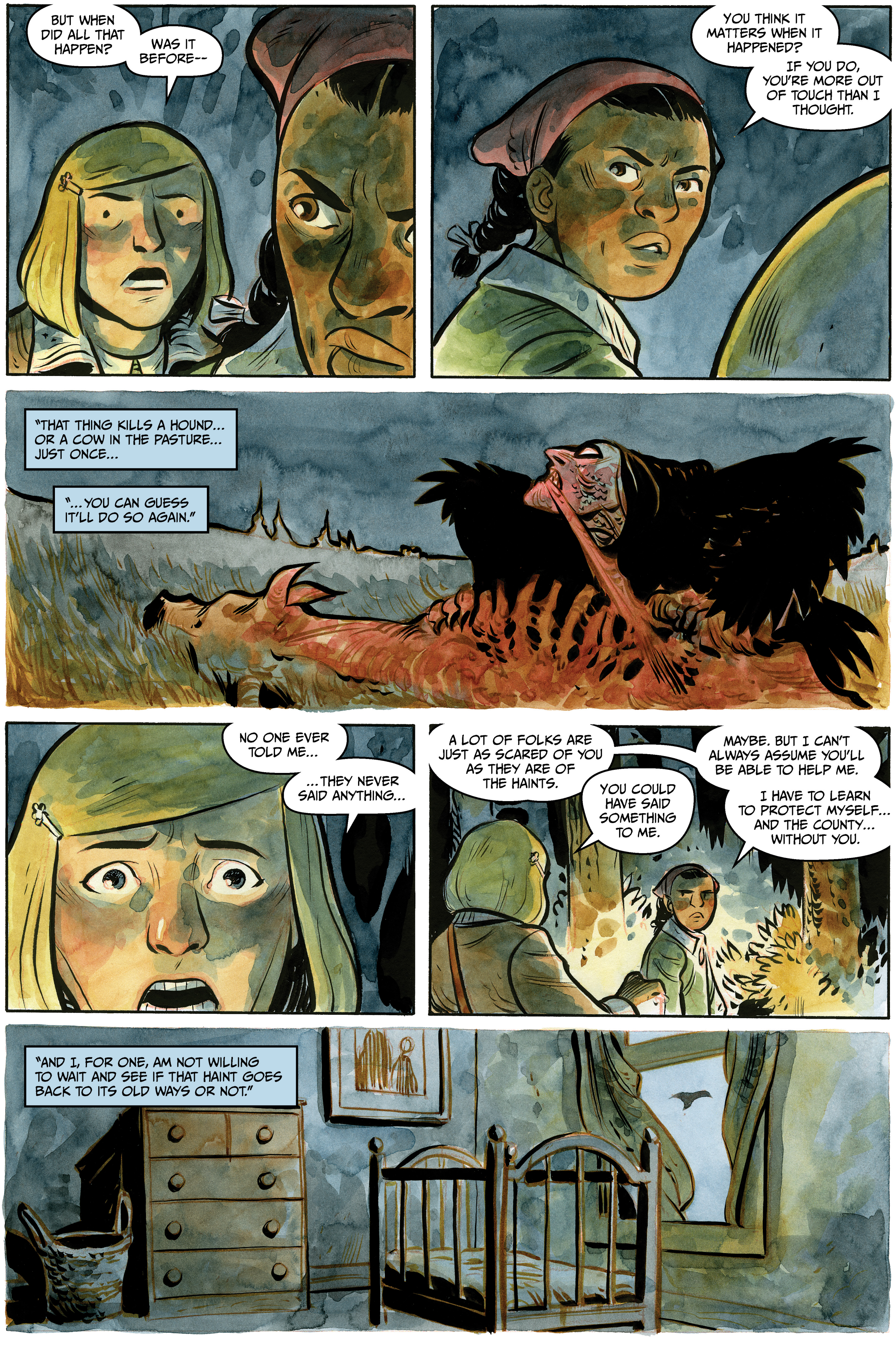

...AND I DON'T HAVE A CARE WHAT *NO ONE* TELLS YOU.
"NO ONE." YOU MEAN *EMMY*.
I KNOW SHE'S YOUR FRIEND.
I'VE HAD FRIENDS, TOO. *POWERFUL* FRIENDS, JUST LIKE THAT GIRL.
AND I MADE THEM *PROMISES*.
I ACCEPTED THE *LESSONS*.
I SWORE TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE OF MASON HOLLOW ...OF *ALL* OF HARROW COUNTY...
COUGH!
HCK!
KAFF!

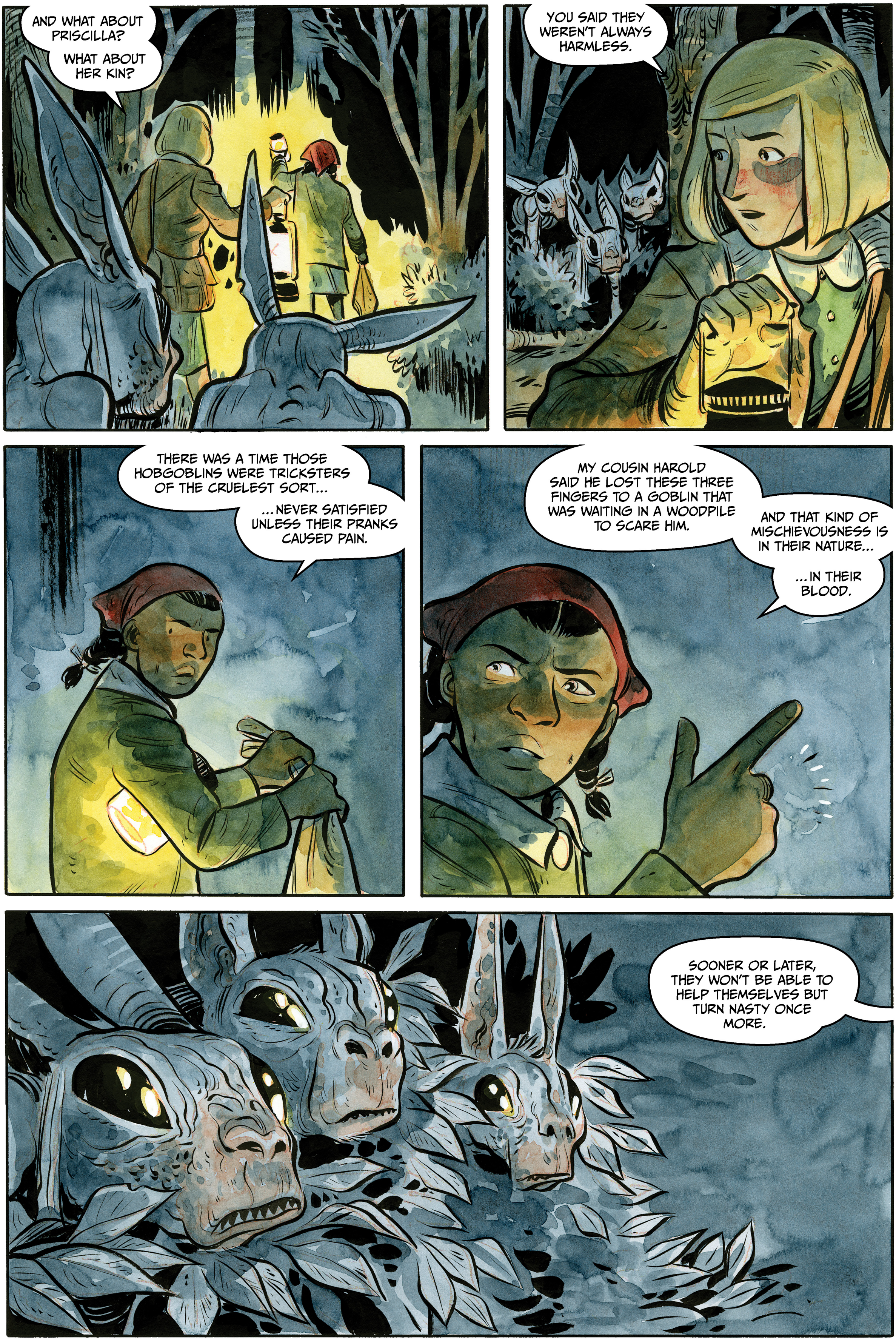

I...SWORE TO PROTECT THEM FROM THAT GIRL...
...WHAT SHE WAS BEFORE.
EMMY'S NOT LIKE THAT.
SHE'S NOT LIKE HESTER.
SHE AIN'T LIKE US, NEITHER.
NOW, GIRL.
YOU HAVE TO DECIDE FOR YOURSELF...
...IF'N YOU'RE WILLING TO MAKE THE SAME PROMISE I MADE...
...AND IF'N YOU'RE WILLING TO DIE FOR IT.
AND EVEN THOUGH BERNICE DEARLY LOVED EMMY, SHE KNEW DEEP DOWN THAT IF SHE WAS GOING TO PROTECT HARROW COUNTY...

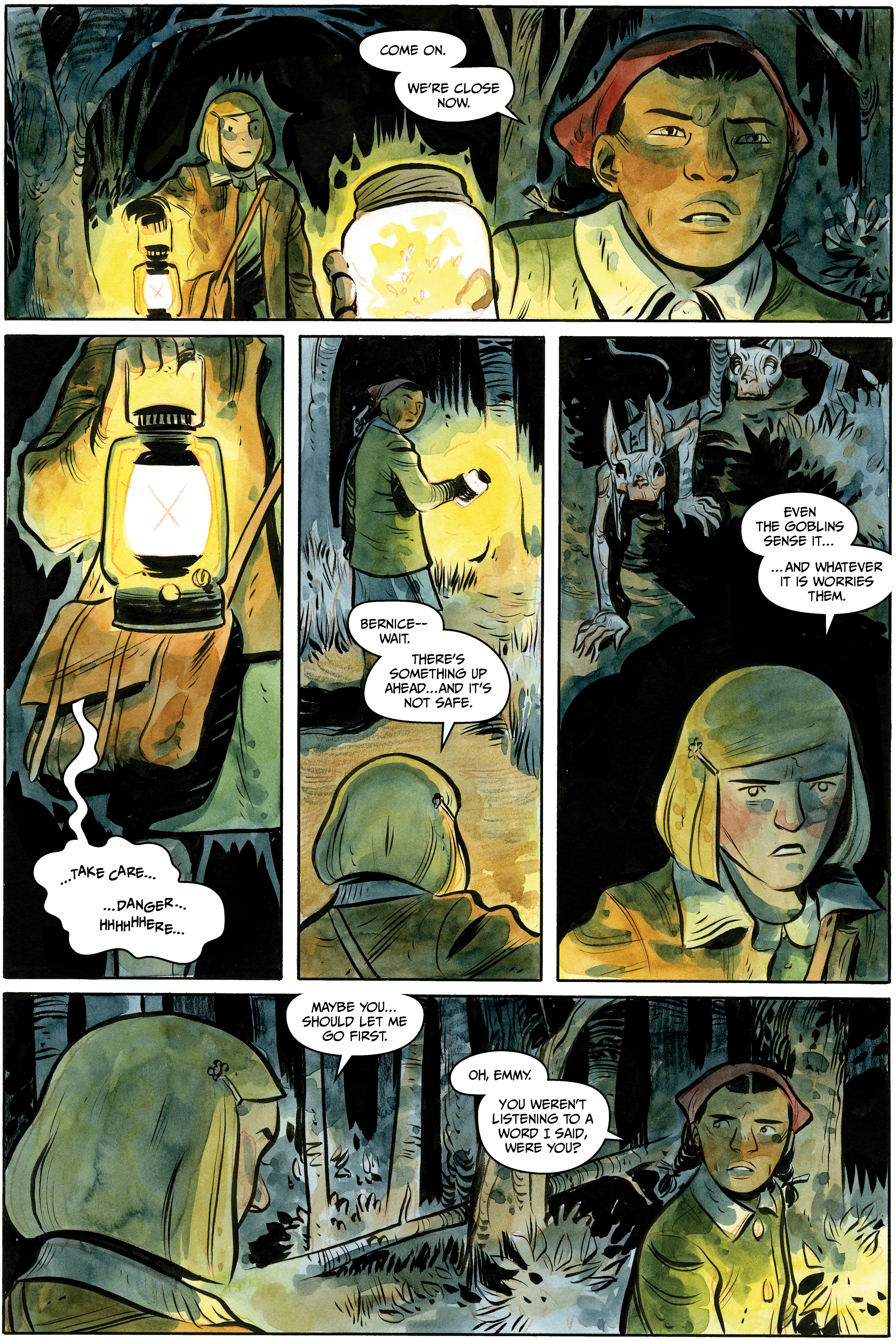

...SHE MIGHT ONE DAY HAVE TO STAND *AGAINST* HER FRIEND.
BERNICE? WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?
WHY ARE YOU... HUNTING HAINTS?
I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU CARE SO MUCH NOW, EMMY.
SEEMS TO ME, YOU ALL BUT *FORGOT* ABOUT HELPING FOLKS AROUND HARROW.
I'M TENDING TO MATTERS *YOU* OUGHT TO HANDLE, EMMY.
BUT LATELY YOU SEEM TO CARE MORE ABOUT *HAINTS* THAN YOU DO ABOUT *PEOPLE*!
THAT AIN'T FAIR AND YOU KNOW IT.
I'VE BEEN DOING WHAT I CAN TO--
I DON'T MEAN TO PLACE BLAME.
BUT YOU'VE BEEN...
...I DON'T KNOW...
DISTRACTED.
THAT'S RIGHT.
I WASN'T SURE IF YOU EVEN REALIZED IT.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON WITH YOU, EMMY, BUT THERE ARE PLENTY OF PEOPLE IN HARROW WHO ARE *SCARED*.
AND THESE HAINTS OF YOURS ARE RUNNING *WILD*!
THEY'RE NOT *MY* HAINTS.

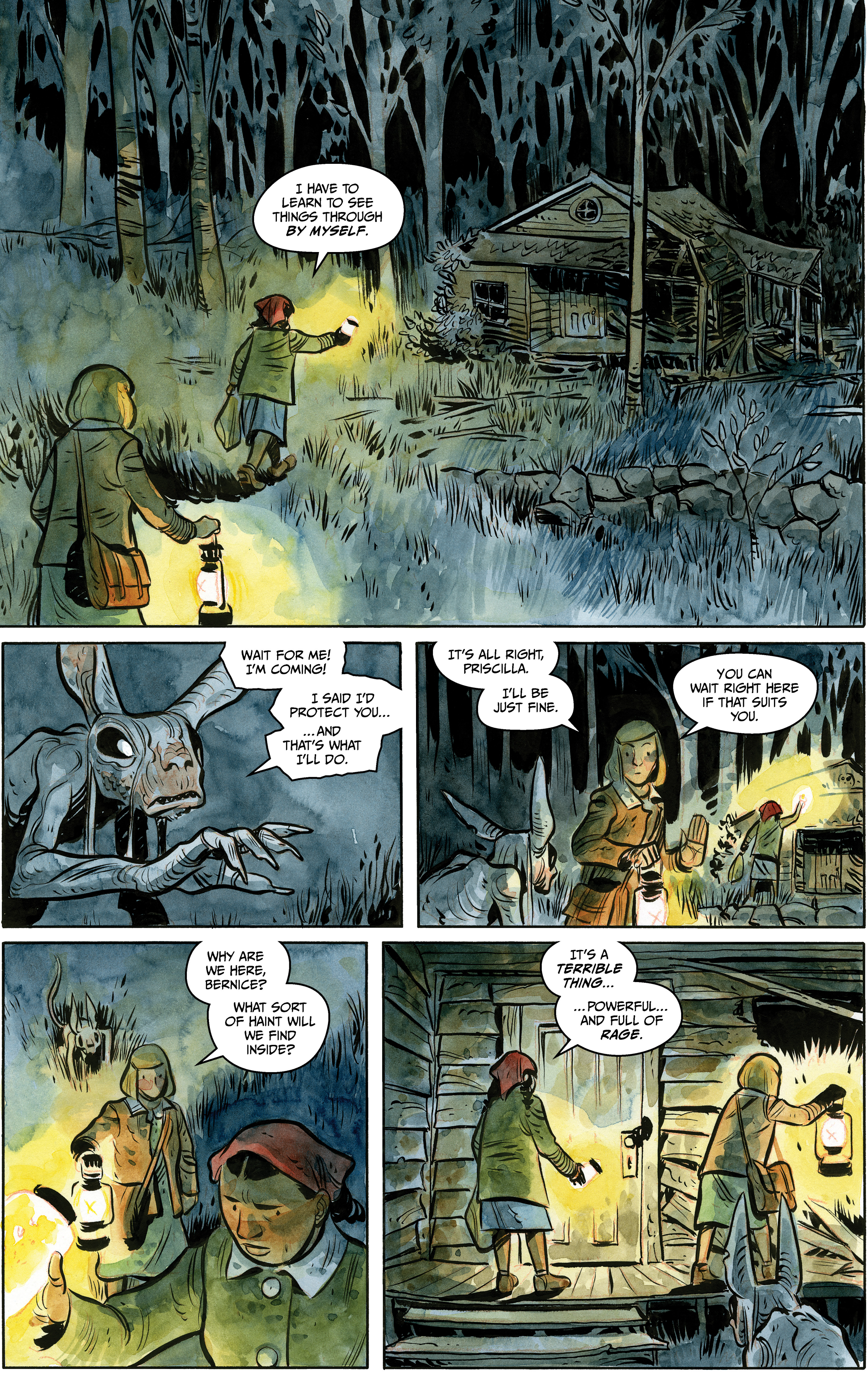

THAT A FACT?
THEY...
...THEY JUST CAME TO ME FOR HELP.
I JUST BET THEY DID.
THERE WAS A TIME, *NORMAL FOLKS* MIGHT'VE COME TO YOU FOR HELP, TOO.
HOW CAN THEY COME TO YOU FOR AID, THOUGH, WHEN YOU'RE ALSO HELPING THE VERY CREATURES THEY'RE SO AFRAID OF?
THEY DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID--NOT OF PRISCILLA AND HER KIN!
THEY DON'T MEAN ANY HARM.
BUT THEY WEREN'T ALWAYS HARMLESS, NOT ALL OF THEM.
AND THEY'RE NOT THE *ONLY* HAINTS IN THE COUNTY.
COME WITH ME.
I'LL SHOW YOU.

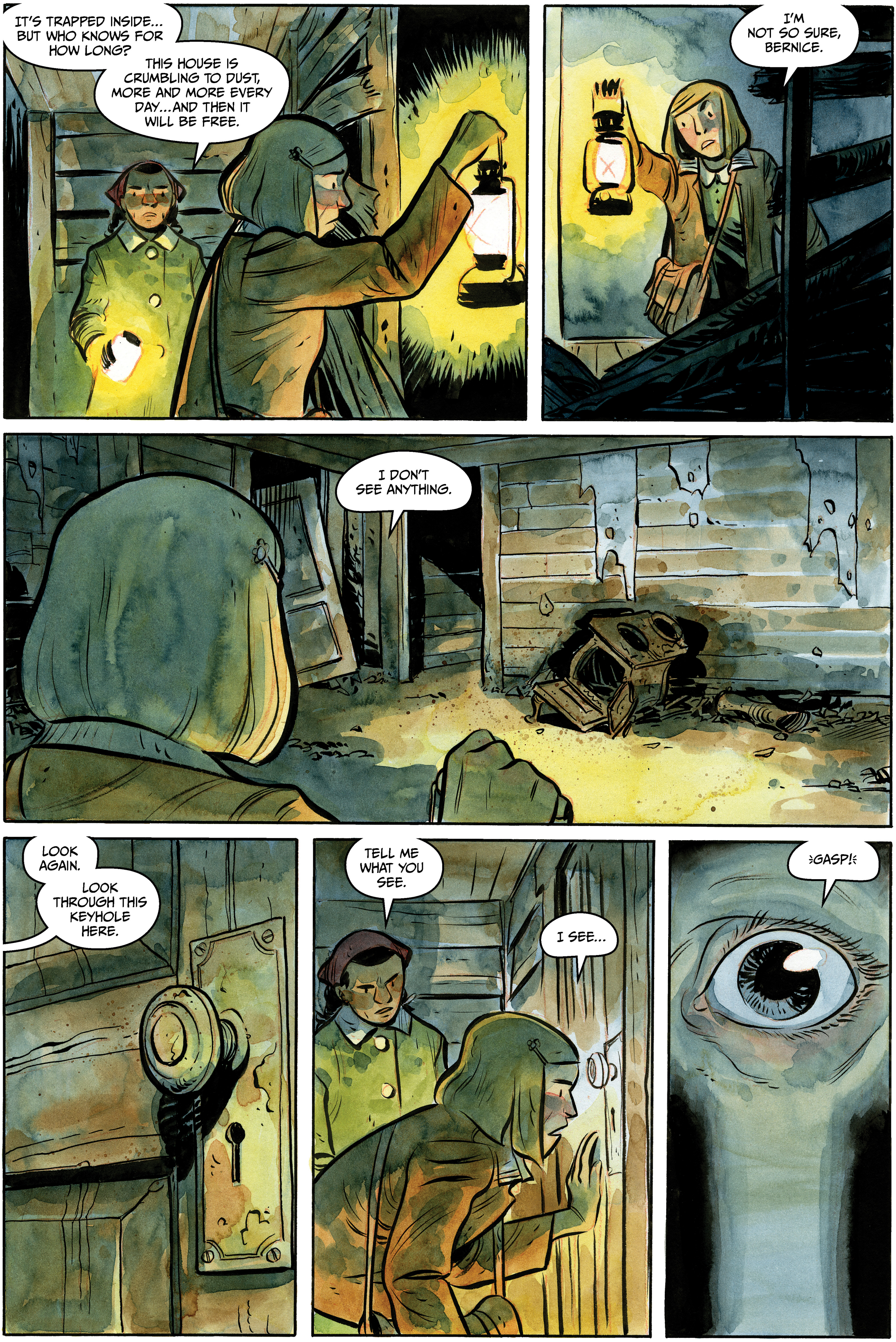

YOU FOUND THAT HAINT, DIDN'T YOU?
YOU FOUND THE *BIRD THING*?
I FOUND HER...*DEAD.*
WELL, I WOULDN'T LOSE ANY SLEEP OVER THAT.
"LOVEY TOLD ME ALL ABOUT HER.
"SHE WAS A RUTHLESS CREATURE...A HUNTER."
I GUESS HUNTERS NEAR ABOUT *HAVE* TO BE RUTHLESS, DON'T THEY?
I KNEW YOU'D SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
BUT ME AND THAT CREATURE DON'T HAVE A THING IN COMMON, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
"AT ONE TIME, SHE FED ON SMALL ANIMALS AND THE LIKE.
"IF A DOG WENT MISSING FROM THE YARD, IT MIGHT'VE BEEN HER THAT TOOK IT."

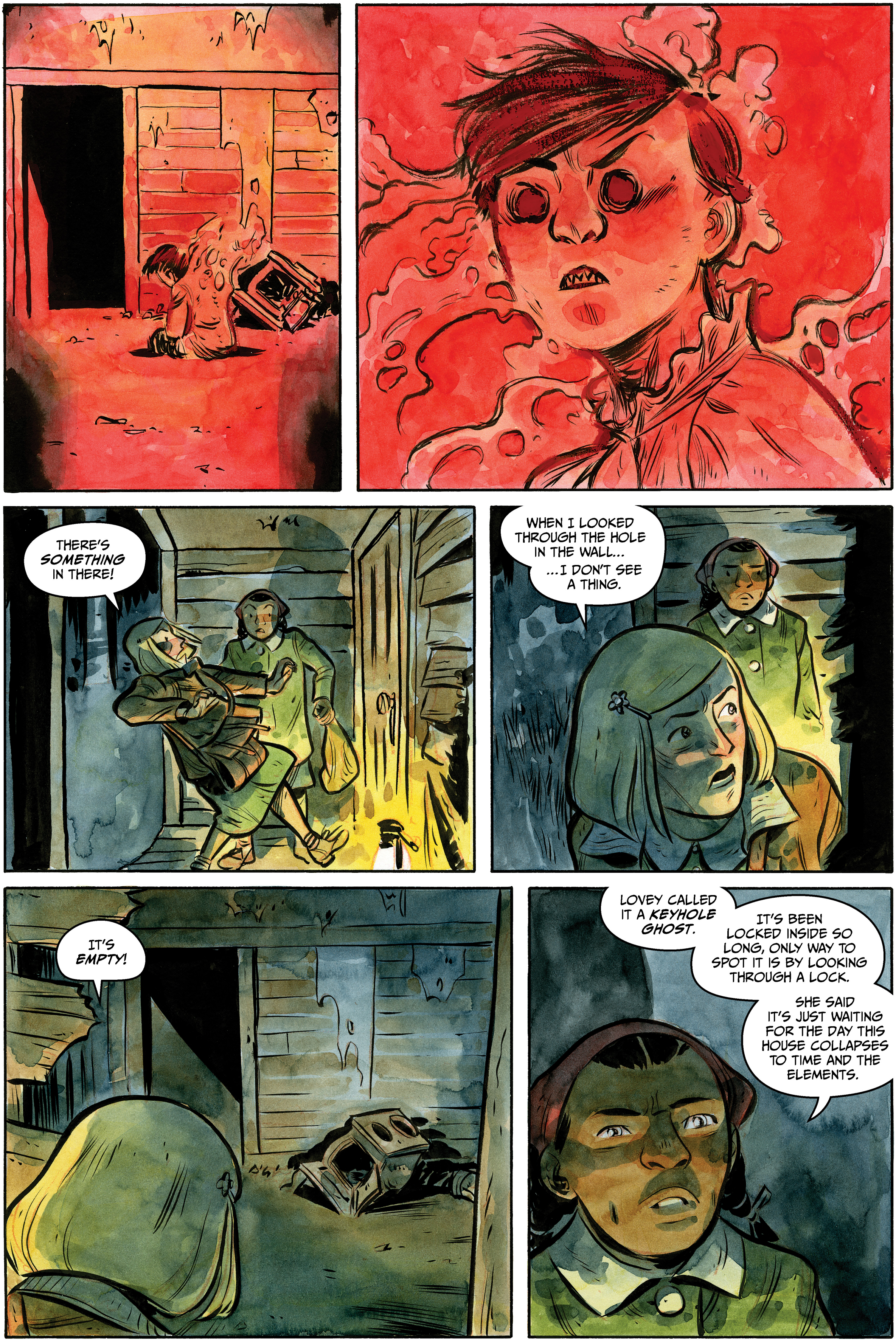

BUT WHEN DID ALL THAT HAPPEN?
WAS IT BEFORE--
YOU THINK IT MATTERS WHEN IT HAPPENED?
IF YOU DO, YOU'RE MORE OUT OF TOUCH THAN I THOUGHT.
"THAT THING KILLS A HOUND... OR A COW IN THE PASTURE... JUST ONCE...
"...YOU CAN GUESS IT'LL DO SO AGAIN."
NO ONE EVER TOLD ME...
...THEY NEVER SAID ANYTHING...
A LOT OF FOLKS ARE JUST AS SCARED OF YOU AS THEY ARE OF THE HAINTS.
YOU COULD HAVE SAID SOMETHING TO ME.
MAYBE. BUT I CAN'T ALWAYS ASSUME YOU'LL BE ABLE TO HELP ME.
I HAVE TO LEARN TO PROTECT MYSELF... AND THE COUNTY... WITHOUT YOU.
"AND I, FOR ONE, AM NOT WILLING TO WAIT AND SEE IF THAT HAINT GOES BACK TO ITS OLD WAYS OR NOT."

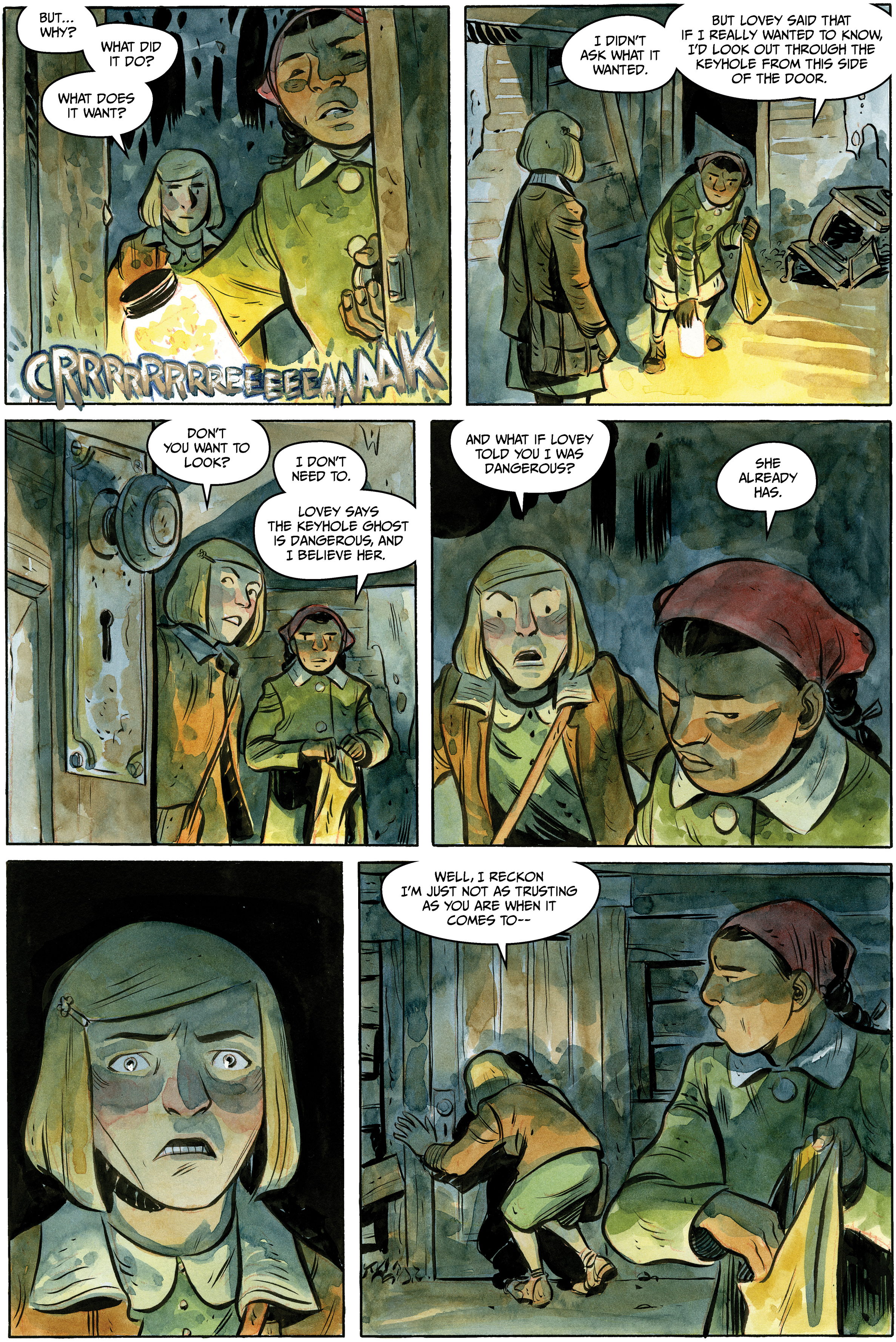

AND WHAT ABOUT PRISCILLA?
WHAT ABOUT HER KIN?
YOU SAID THEY WEREN'T ALWAYS HARMLESS.
THERE WAS A TIME THOSE HOBGOBLINS WERE TRICKSTERS OF THE CRUELEST SORT...
...NEVER SATISFIED UNLESS THEIR PRANKS CAUSED PAIN.
MY COUSIN HAROLD SAID HE LOST THESE THREE FINGERS TO A GOBLIN THAT WAS WAITING IN A WOODPILE TO SCARE HIM.
AND THAT KIND OF MISCHIEVOUSNESS IS IN THEIR NATURE...
...IN THEIR BLOOD.
SOONER OR LATER, THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO HELP THEMSELVES BUT TURN NASTY ONCE MORE.

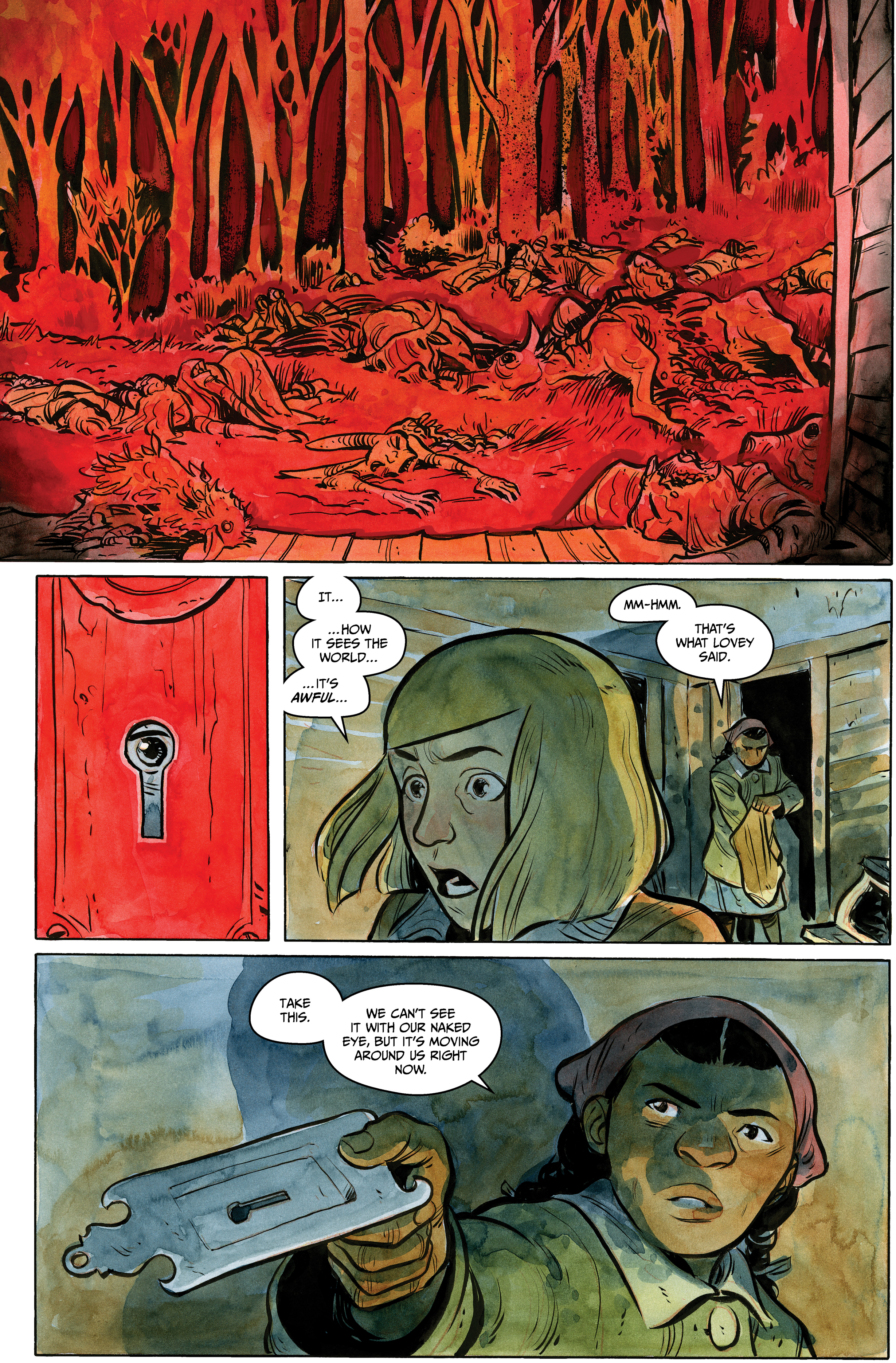

COME ON.
WE'RE CLOSE NOW.
...TAKE CARE...
...DANGER... HHHHHHERE...
BERNICE-- WAIT.
THERE'S SOMETHING UP AHEAD...AND IT'S NOT SAFE.
EVEN THE GOBLINS SENSE IT...
...AND WHATEVER IT IS WORRIES THEM.
MAYBE YOU... SHOULD LET ME GO FIRST.
OH, EMMY.
YOU WEREN'T LISTENING TO A WORD I SAID, WERE YOU?

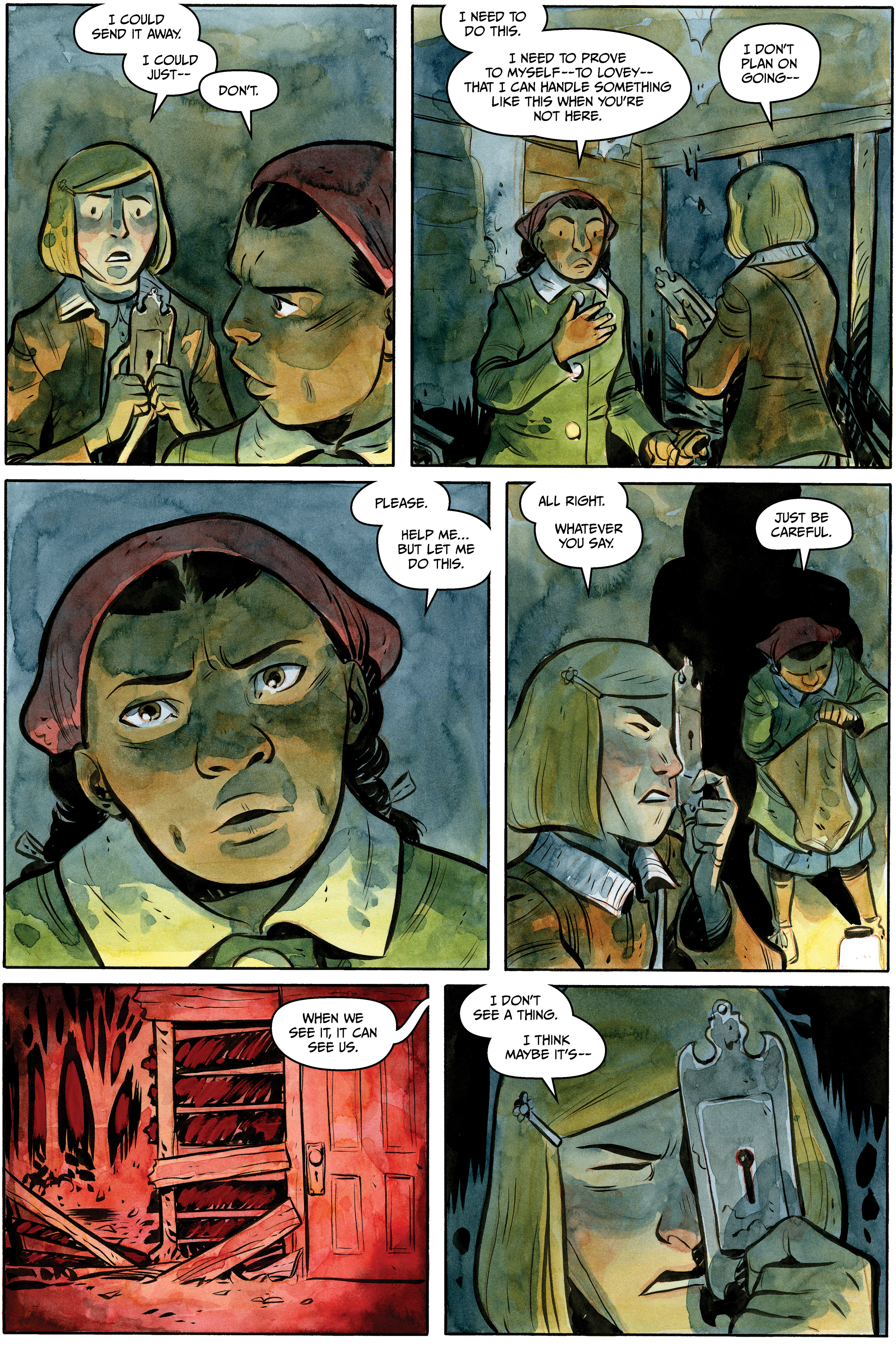

I HAVE TO LEARN TO SEE THINGS THROUGH *BY MYSELF*.
WAIT FOR ME! I'M COMING!
I SAID I'D PROTECT YOU...
...AND THAT'S WHAT I'LL DO.
IT'S ALL RIGHT, PRISCILLA.
I'LL BE JUST FINE.
YOU CAN WAIT RIGHT HERE IF THAT SUITS YOU.
WHY ARE WE HERE, BERNICE?
WHAT SORT OF HAINT WILL WE FIND INSIDE?
IT'S A *TERRIBLE* THING...
...POWERFUL... AND FULL OF *RAGE*.

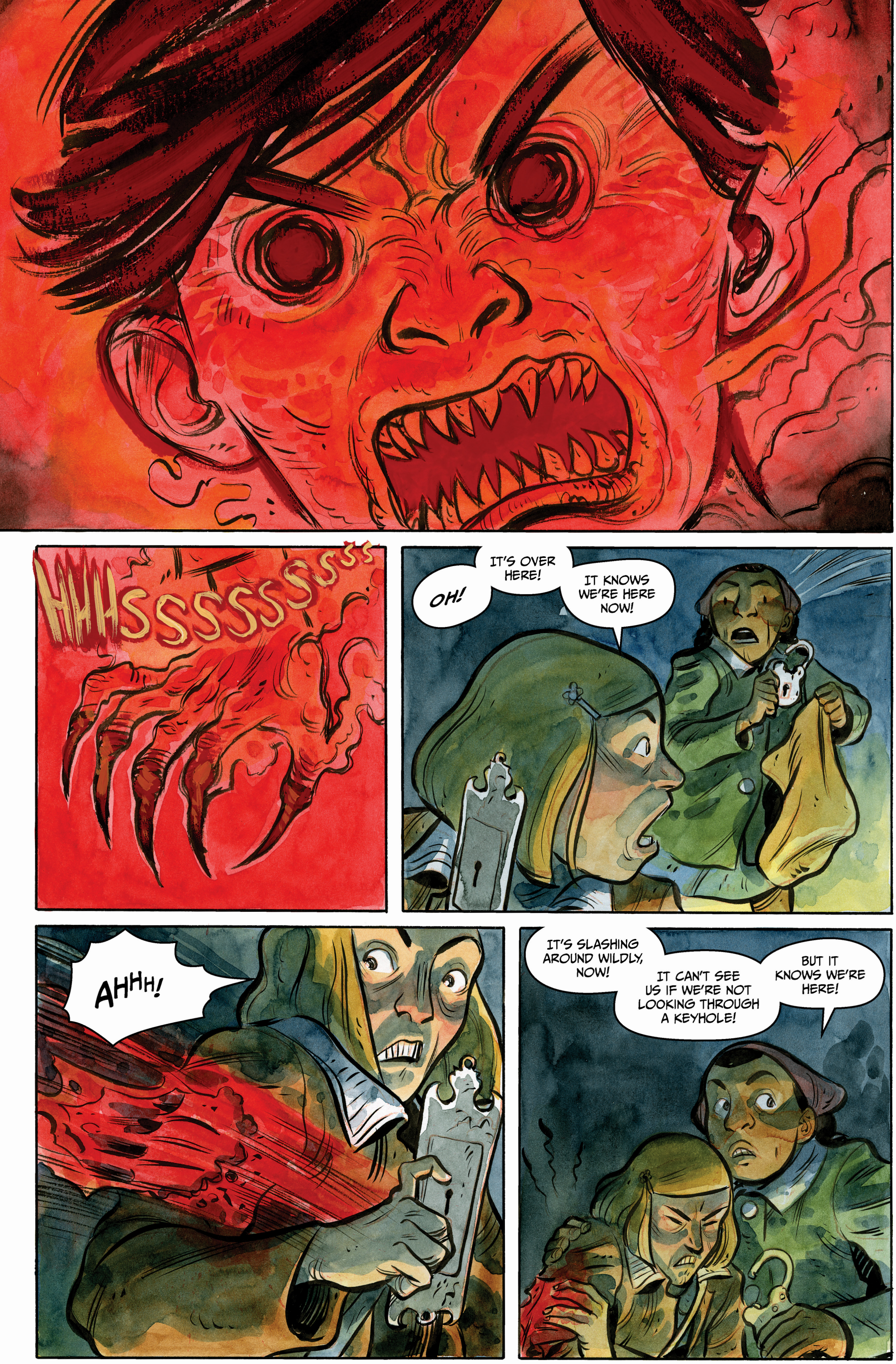

IT'S TRAPPED INSIDE... BUT WHO KNOWS FOR HOW LONG?
THIS HOUSE IS CRUMBLING TO DUST, MORE AND MORE EVERY DAY...AND THEN IT WILL BE FREE.
I'M NOT SO SURE, BERNICE.
I DON'T SEE ANYTHING.
LOOK AGAIN.
LOOK THROUGH THIS KEYHOLE HERE.
TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE.
I SEE...
GASP!

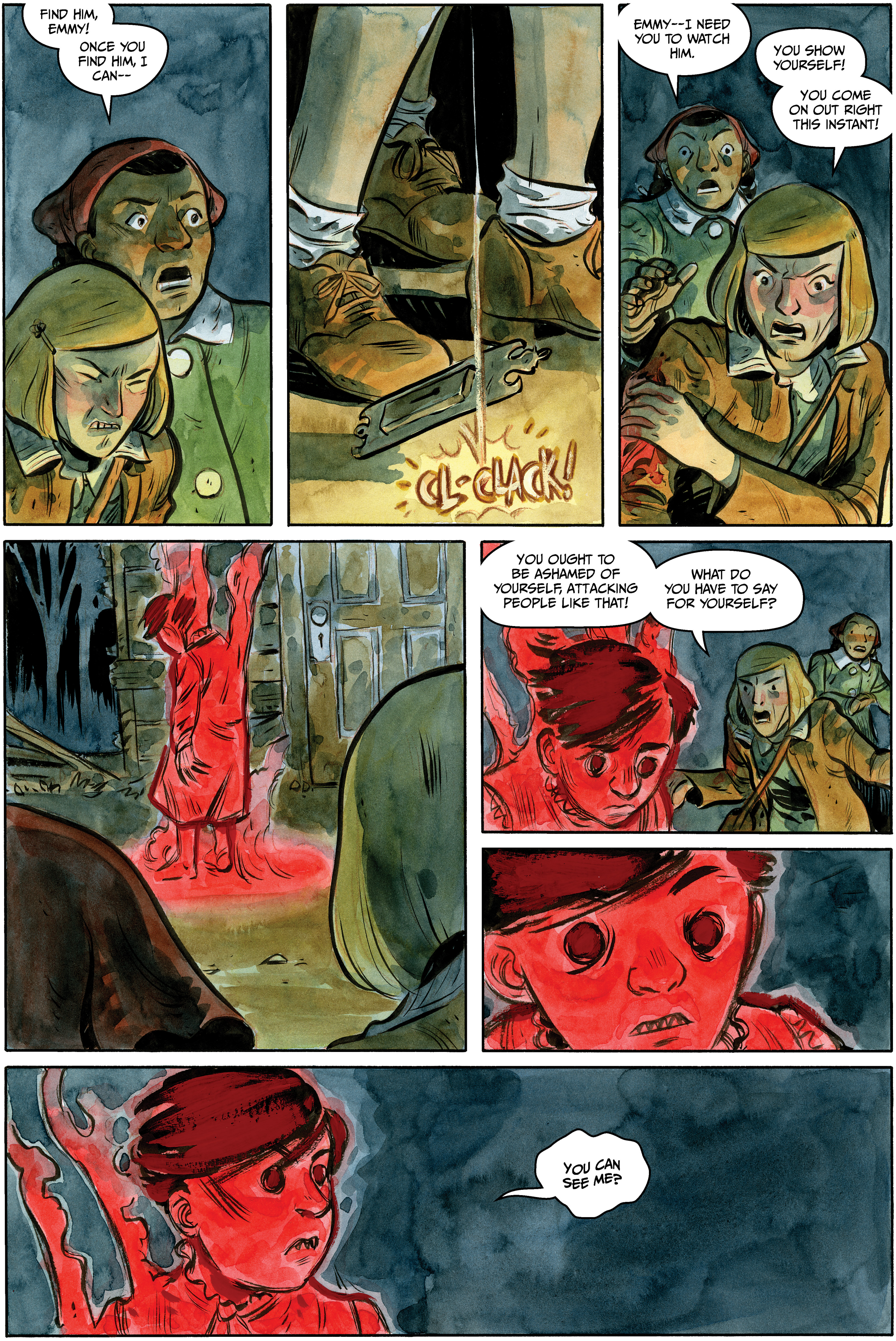

THERE'S *SOMETHING* IN THERE!
WHEN I LOOKED THROUGH THE HOLE IN THE WALL...
...I DON'T SEE A THING.
IT'S *EMPTY!*
LOVEY CALLED IT A *KEYHOLE GHOST.*
IT'S BEEN LOCKED INSIDE SO LONG, ONLY WAY TO SPOT IT IS BY LOOKING THROUGH A LOCK.
SHE SAID IT'S JUST WAITING FOR THE DAY THIS HOUSE COLLAPSES TO TIME AND THE ELEMENTS.

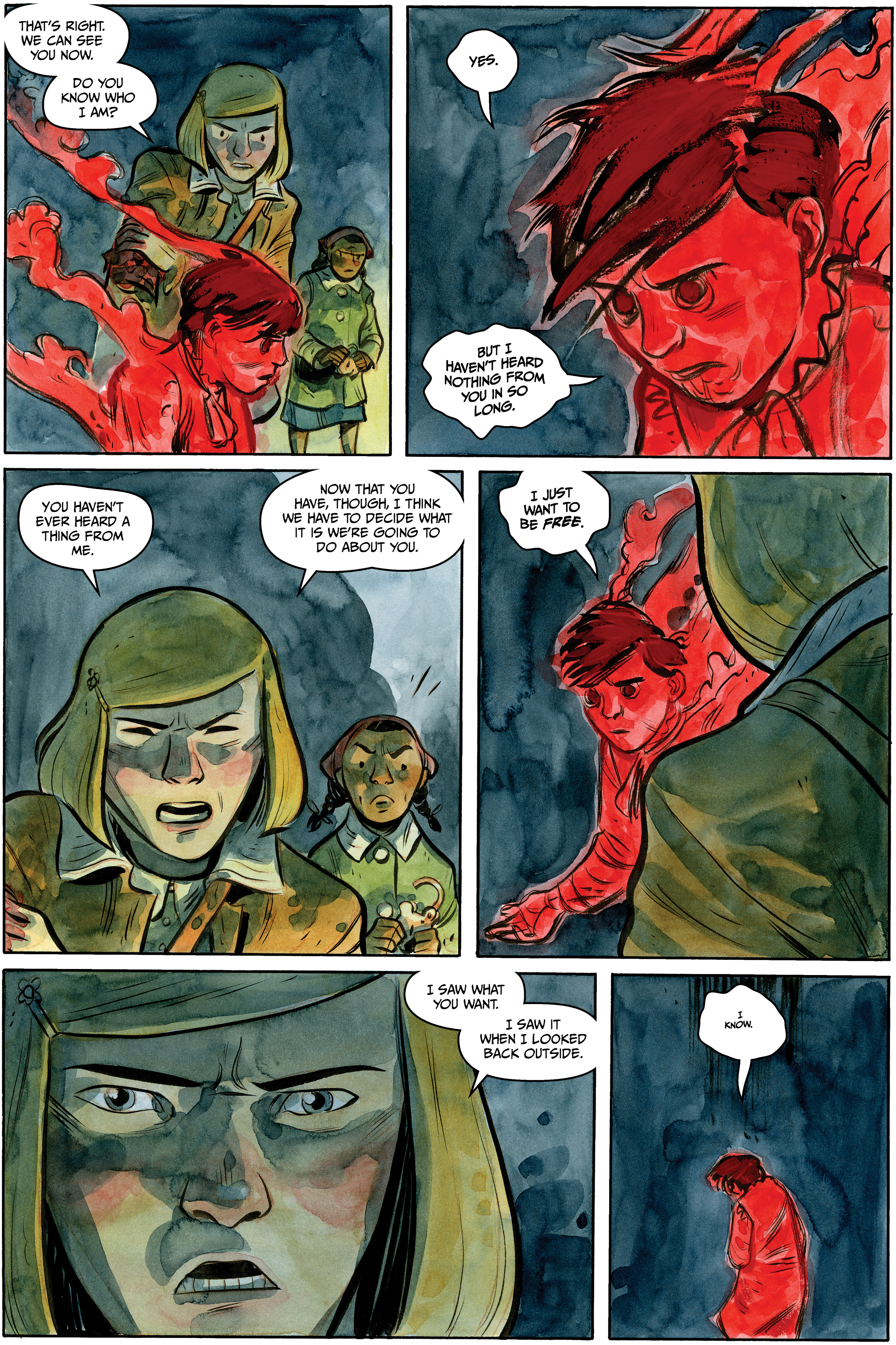

BUT... WHY?
WHAT DID IT DO?
WHAT DOES IT WANT?
CRRRRRRRRREEEEEEAAAAK
I DIDN'T ASK WHAT IT WANTED.
BUT LOVEY SAID THAT IF I REALLY WANTED TO KNOW, I'D LOOK OUT THROUGH THE KEYHOLE FROM THIS SIDE OF THE DOOR.
DON'T YOU WANT TO LOOK?
I DON'T NEED TO.
LOVEY SAYS THE KEYHOLE GHOST IS DANGEROUS, AND I BELIEVE HER.
AND WHAT IF LOVEY TOLD YOU I WAS DANGEROUS?
SHE ALREADY HAS.
WELL, I RECKON I'M JUST NOT AS TRUSTING AS YOU ARE WHEN IT COMES TO--

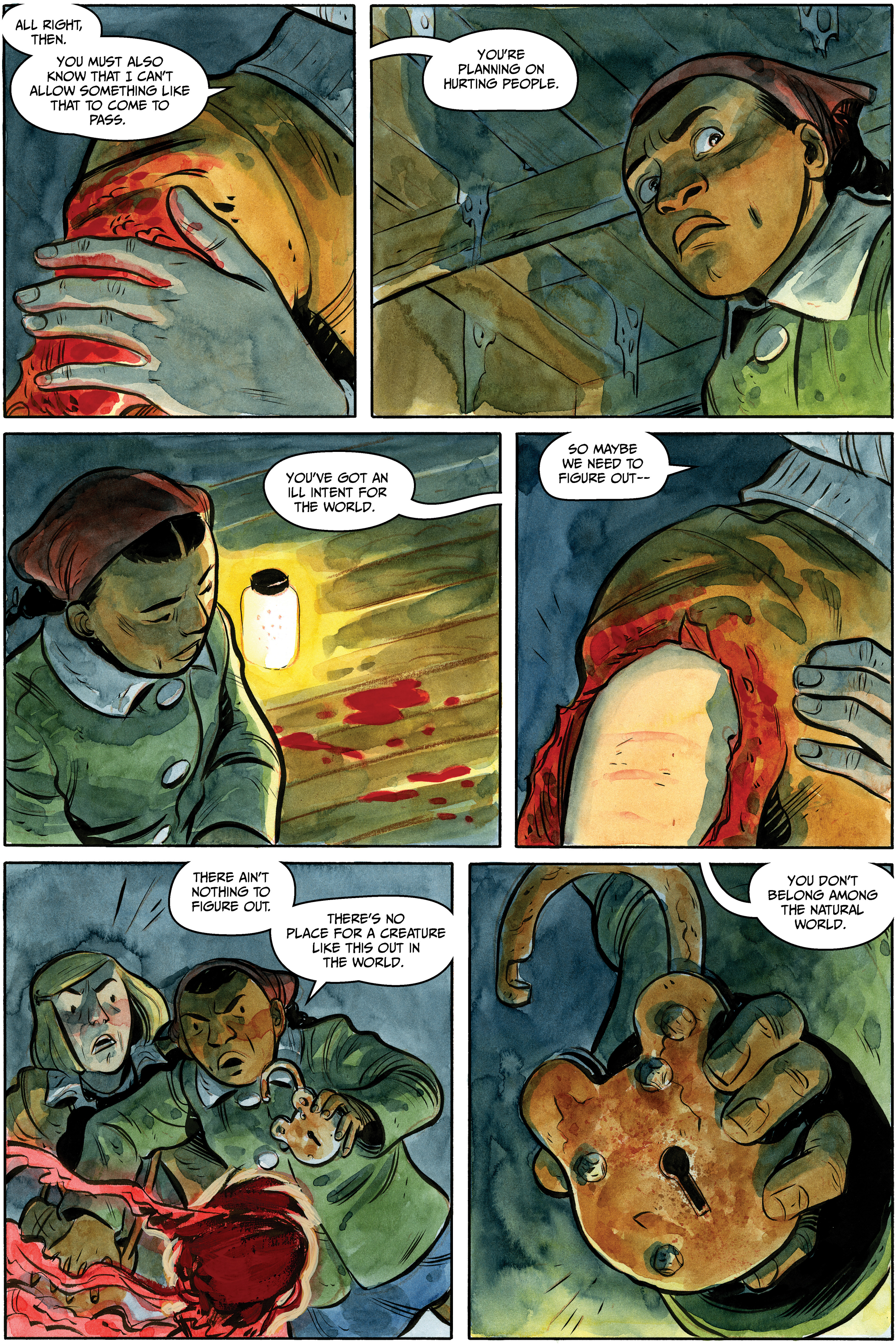

IT...
...HOW IT SEES THE WORLD...
...IT'S *AWFUL*...
MM-HMM.
THAT'S WHAT LOVEY SAID.
TAKE THIS.
WE CAN'T SEE IT WITH OUR NAKED EYE, BUT IT'S MOVING AROUND US RIGHT NOW.

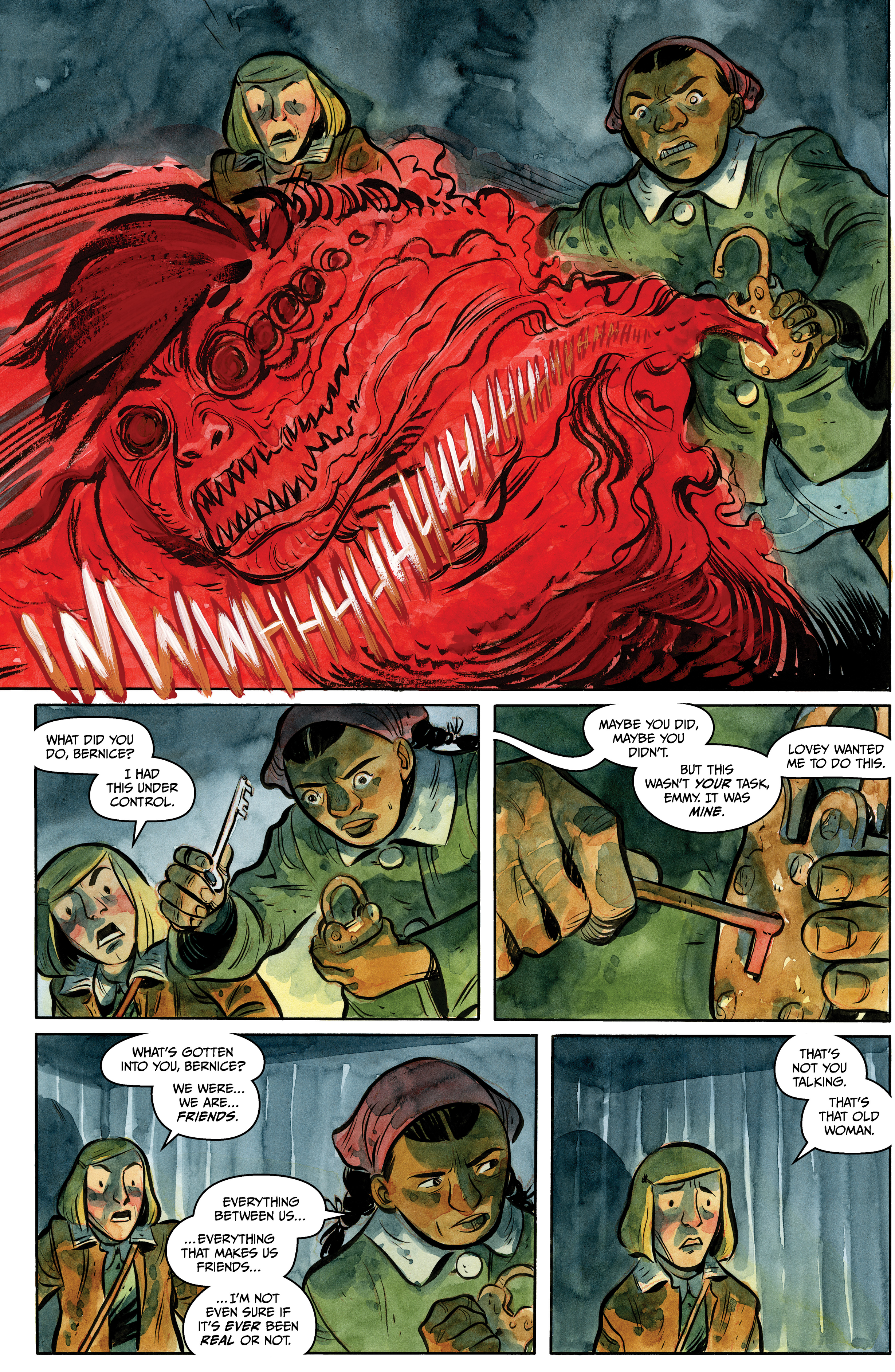

I COULD SEND IT AWAY.
I COULD JUST--
DON'T.
I NEED TO DO THIS.
I NEED TO PROVE TO MYSELF--TO LOVEY--THAT I CAN HANDLE SOMETHING LIKE THIS WHEN YOU'RE NOT HERE.
I DON'T PLAN ON GOING--
PLEASE.
HELP ME... BUT LET ME DO THIS.
ALL RIGHT.
WHATEVER YOU SAY.
JUST BE CAREFUL.
WHEN WE SEE IT, IT CAN SEE US.
I DON'T SEE A THING.
I THINK MAYBE IT'S--

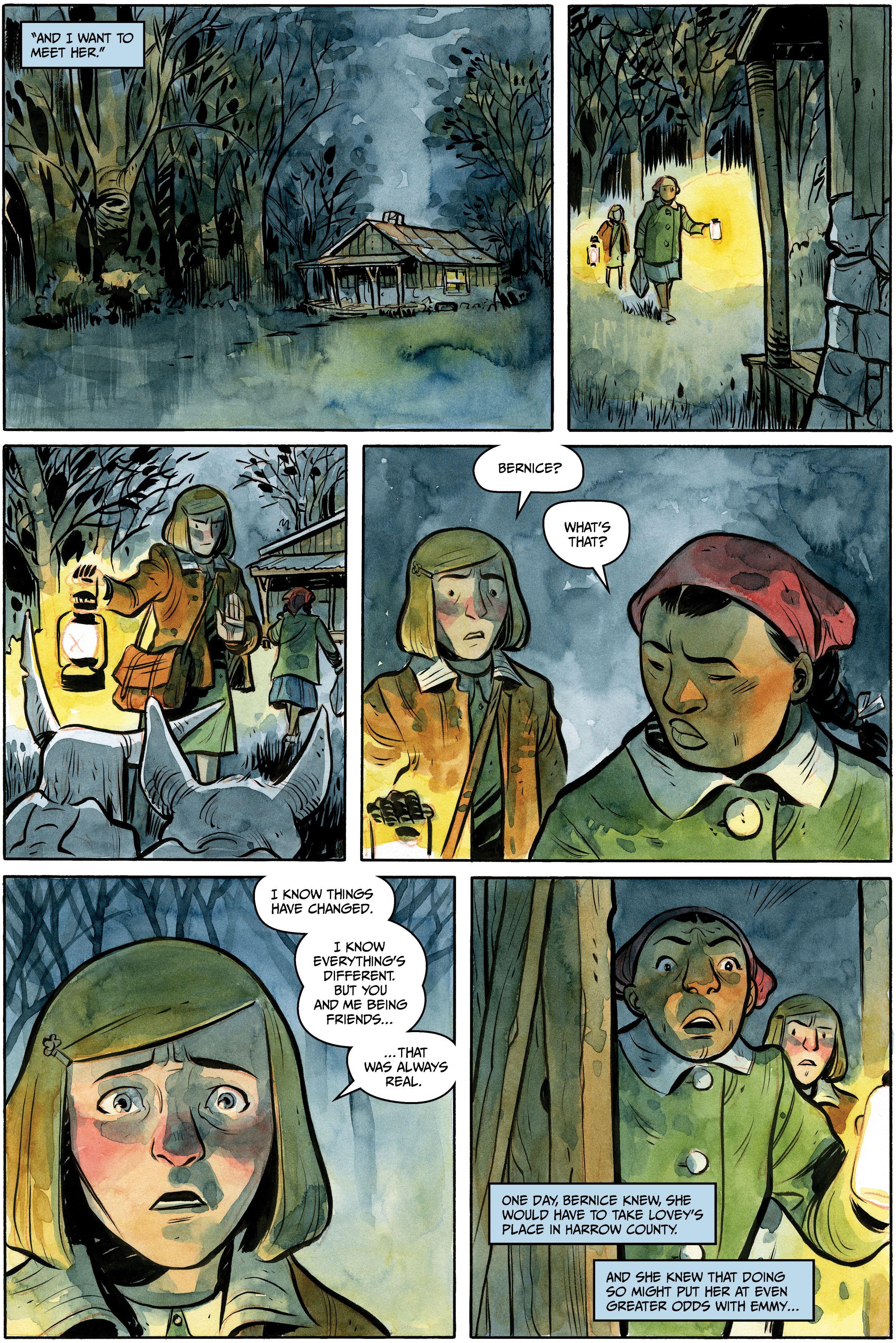

HHHSSSSSSSSSSS
OH!
IT'S OVER HERE!
IT KNOWS WE'RE HERE NOW!
AHHH!
IT'S SLASHING AROUND WILDLY, NOW!
IT CAN'T SEE US IF WE'RE NOT LOOKING THROUGH A KEYHOLE!
BUT IT KNOWS WE'RE HERE!

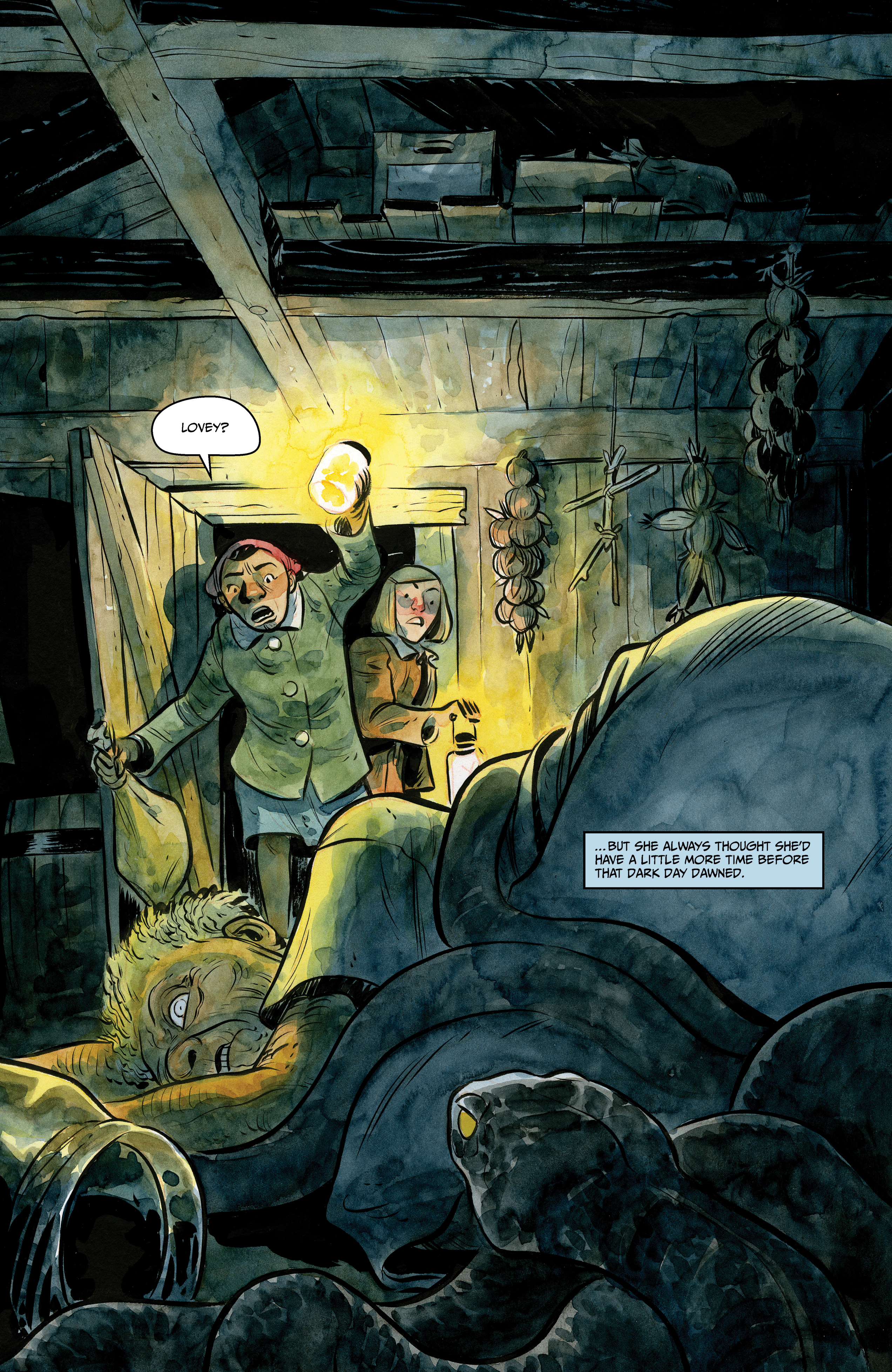

FIND HIM, EMMY!
ONCE YOU FIND HIM, I CAN--
CL-CLACK!
EMMY--I NEED YOU TO WATCH HIM.
YOU SHOW YOURSELF!
YOU COME ON OUT RIGHT THIS INSTANT!
YOU OUGHT TO BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF, ATTACKING PEOPLE LIKE THAT!
WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY FOR YOURSELF?
YOU CAN SEE ME?


THAT'S RIGHT. WE CAN SEE YOU NOW.
DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
YES.
BUT I HAVEN'T HEARD NOTHING FROM YOU IN SO LONG.
YOU HAVEN'T EVER HEARD A THING FROM ME.
NOW THAT YOU HAVE, THOUGH, I THINK WE HAVE TO DECIDE WHAT IT IS WE'RE GOING TO DO ABOUT YOU.
I JUST WANT TO BE *FREE*.
I SAW WHAT YOU WANT.
I SAW IT WHEN I LOOKED BACK OUTSIDE.
I KNOW.

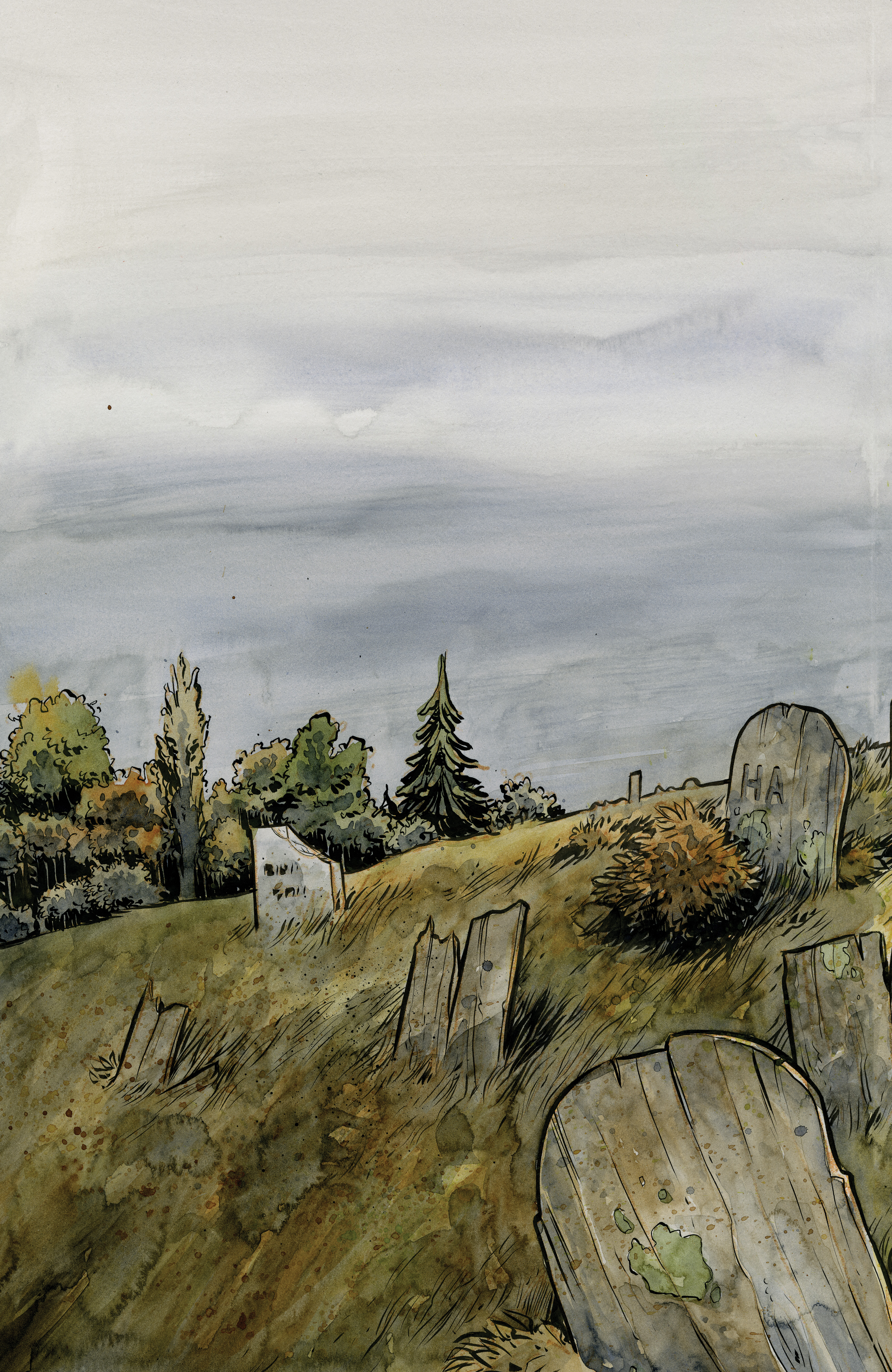

ALL RIGHT, THEN.
YOU MUST ALSO KNOW THAT I CAN'T ALLOW SOMETHING LIKE THAT TO COME TO PASS.
YOU'RE PLANNING ON HURTING PEOPLE.
YOU'VE GOT AN ILL INTENT FOR THE WORLD.
SO MAYBE WE NEED TO FIGURE OUT--
THERE AIN'T NOTHING TO FIGURE OUT.
THERE'S NO PLACE FOR A CREATURE LIKE THIS OUT IN THE WORLD.
YOU DON'T BELONG AMONG THE NATURAL WORLD.

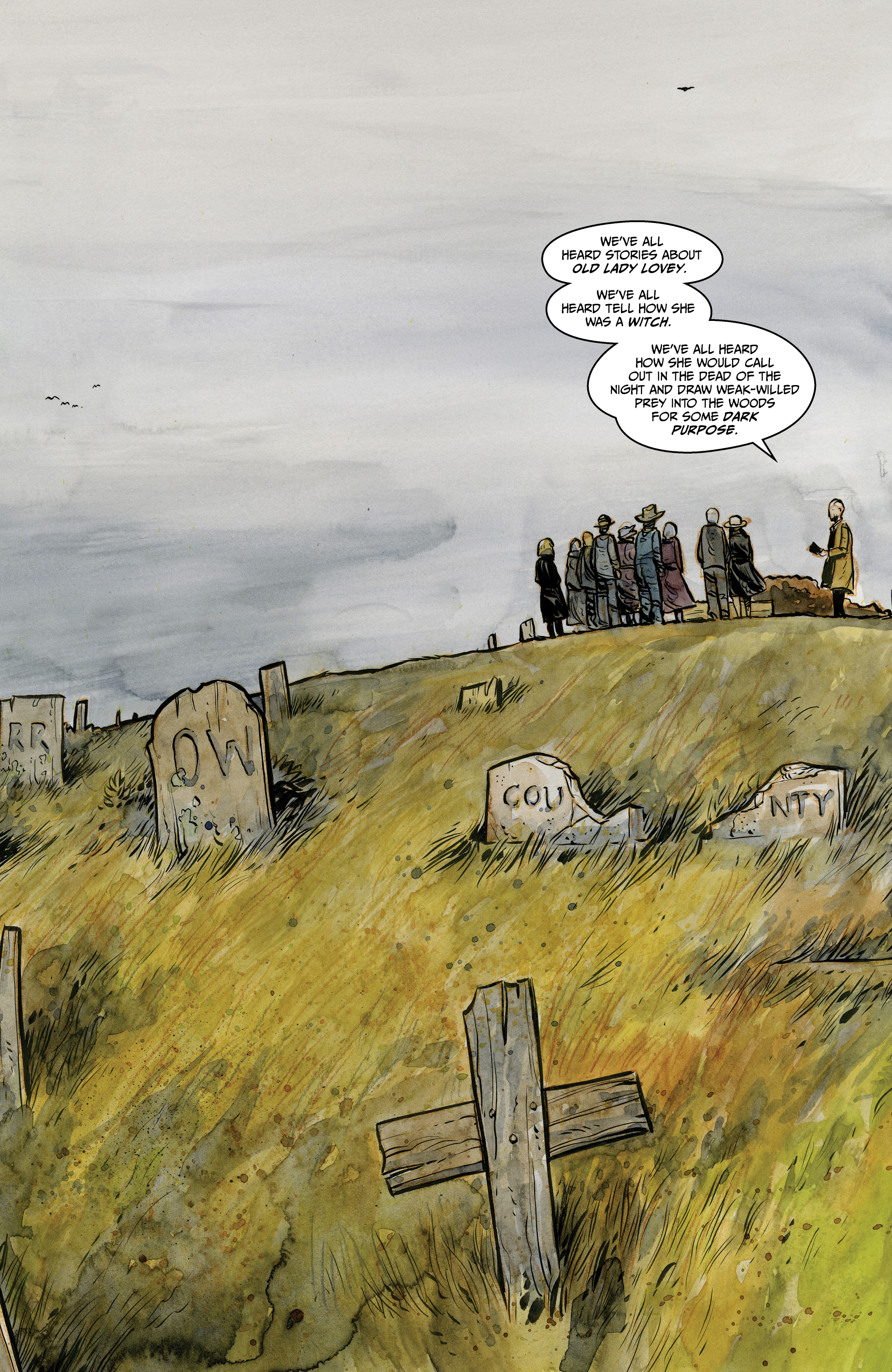

WWWHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH
WHAT DID YOU DO, BERNICE?
I HAD THIS UNDER CONTROL.
MAYBE YOU DID, MAYBE YOU DIDN'T.
BUT THIS WASN'T *YOUR* TASK, EMMY. IT WAS *MINE.*
LOVEY WANTED ME TO DO THIS.
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU, BERNICE?
WE WERE... WE ARE... ***FRIENDS.***
EVERYTHING BETWEEN US...
...EVERYTHING THAT MAKES US FRIENDS...
...I'M NOT EVEN SURE IF IT'S ***EVER*** BEEN ***REAL*** OR NOT.
THAT'S NOT YOU TALKING.
THAT'S THAT OLD WOMAN.

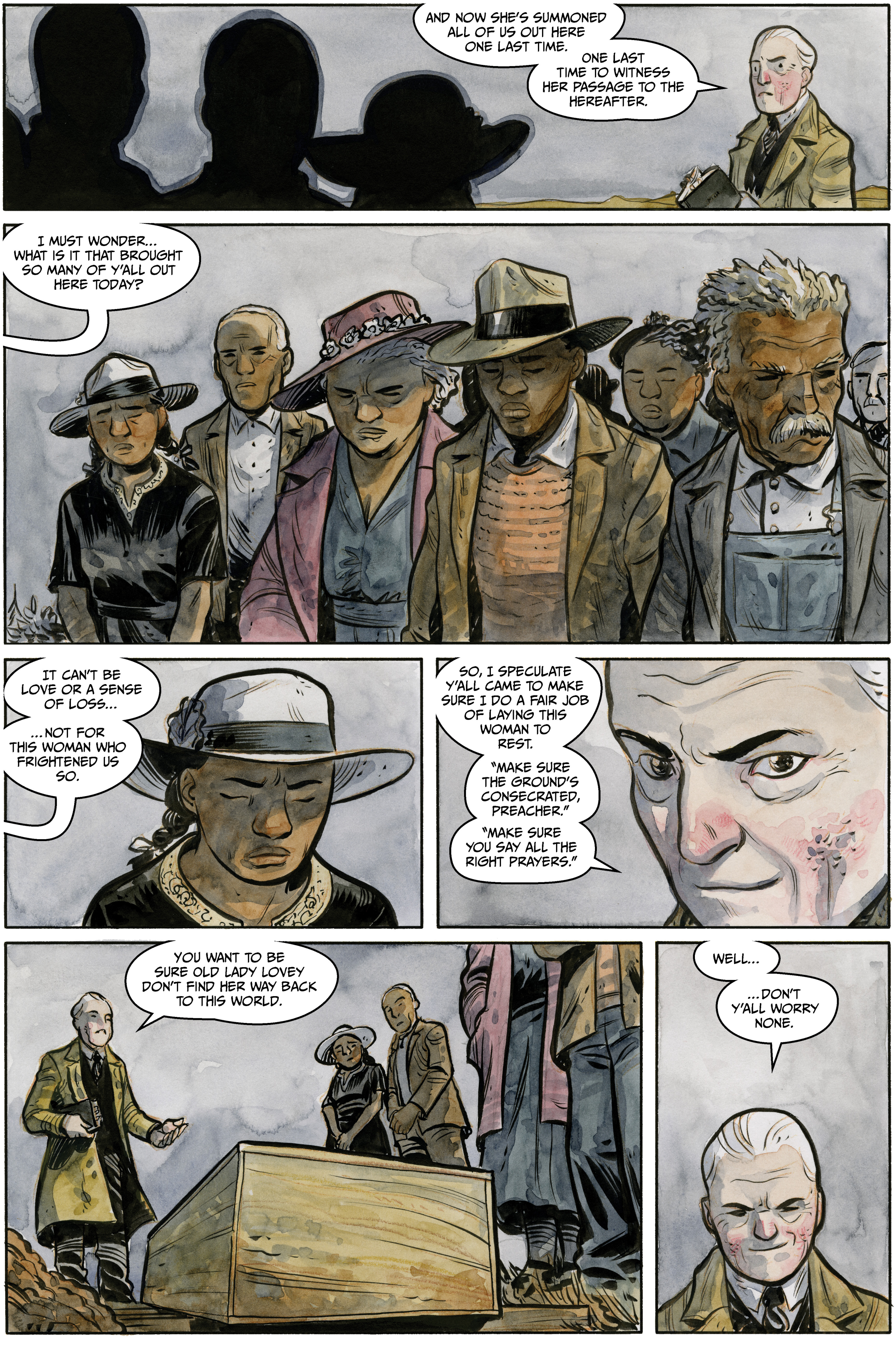

"AND I WANT TO MEET HER."
BERNICE?
WHAT'S THAT?
I KNOW THINGS HAVE CHANGED.
I KNOW EVERYTHING'S DIFFERENT. BUT YOU AND ME BEING FRIENDS...
...THAT WAS ALWAYS REAL.
ONE DAY, BERNICE KNEW, SHE WOULD HAVE TO TAKE LOVEY'S PLACE IN HARROW COUNTY.
AND SHE KNEW THAT DOING SO MIGHT PUT HER AT EVEN GREATER ODDS WITH EMMY...

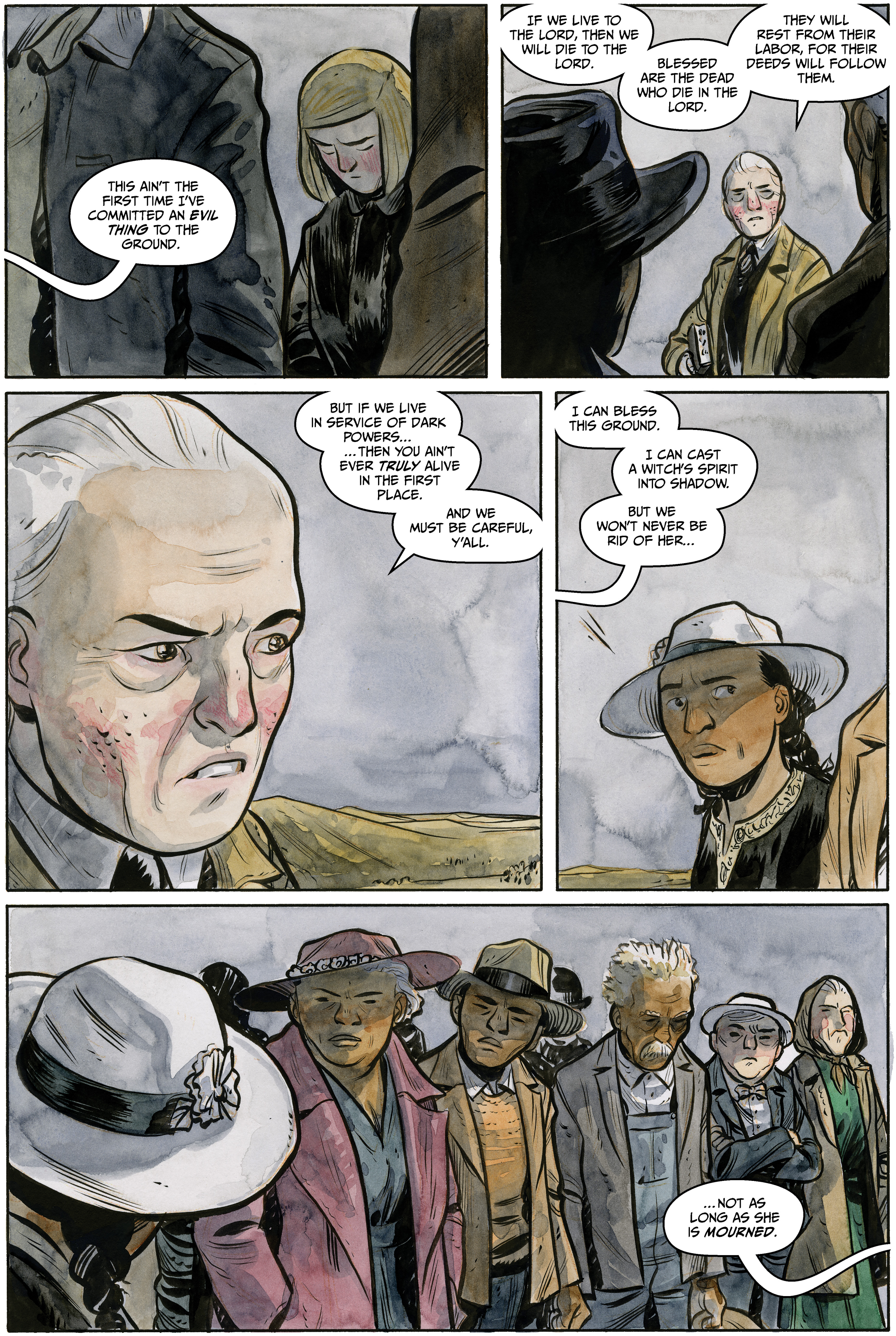

LOVEY?
...BUT SHE ALWAYS THOUGHT SHE'D HAVE A LITTLE MORE TIME BEFORE THAT DARK DAY DAWNED.

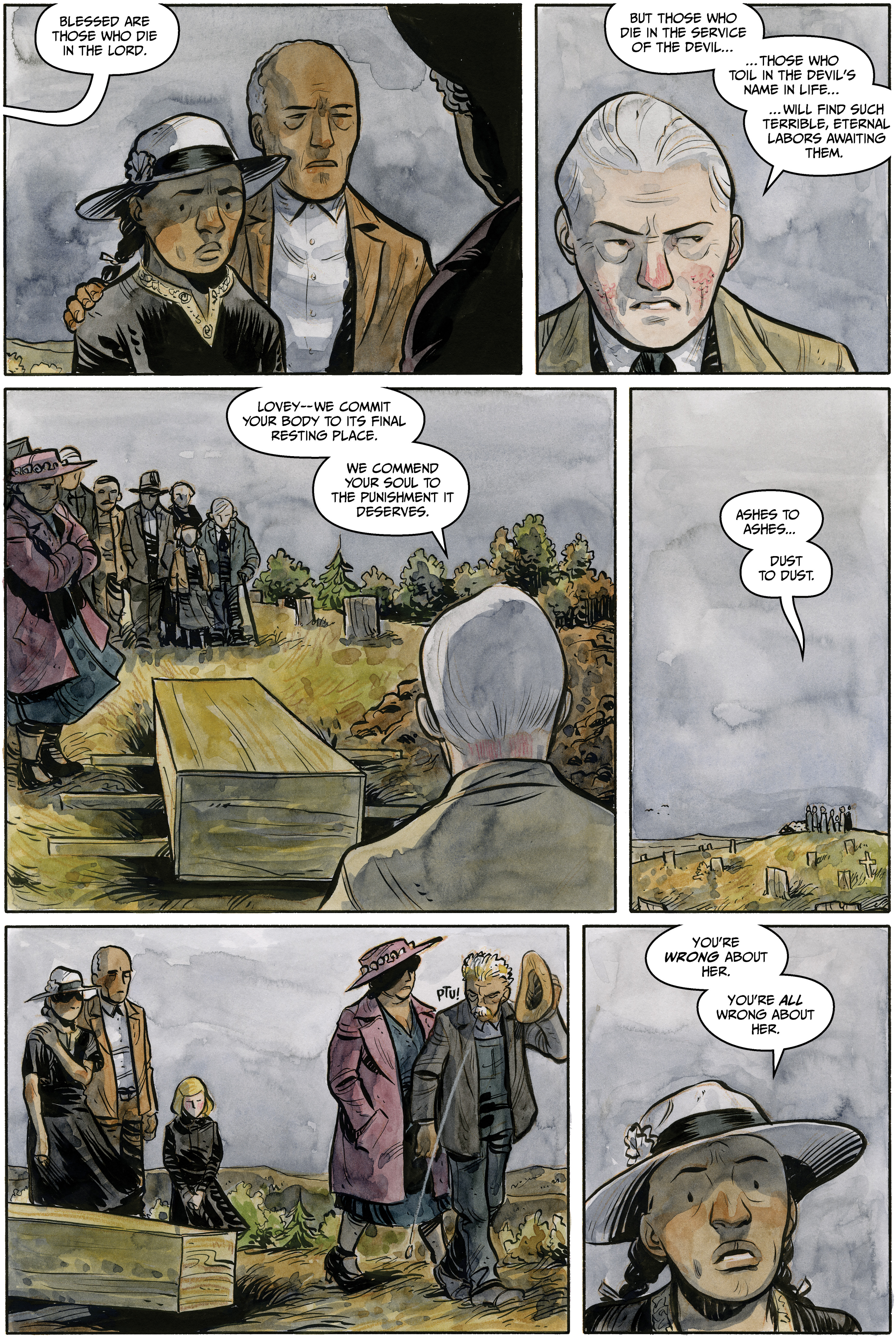
THREE

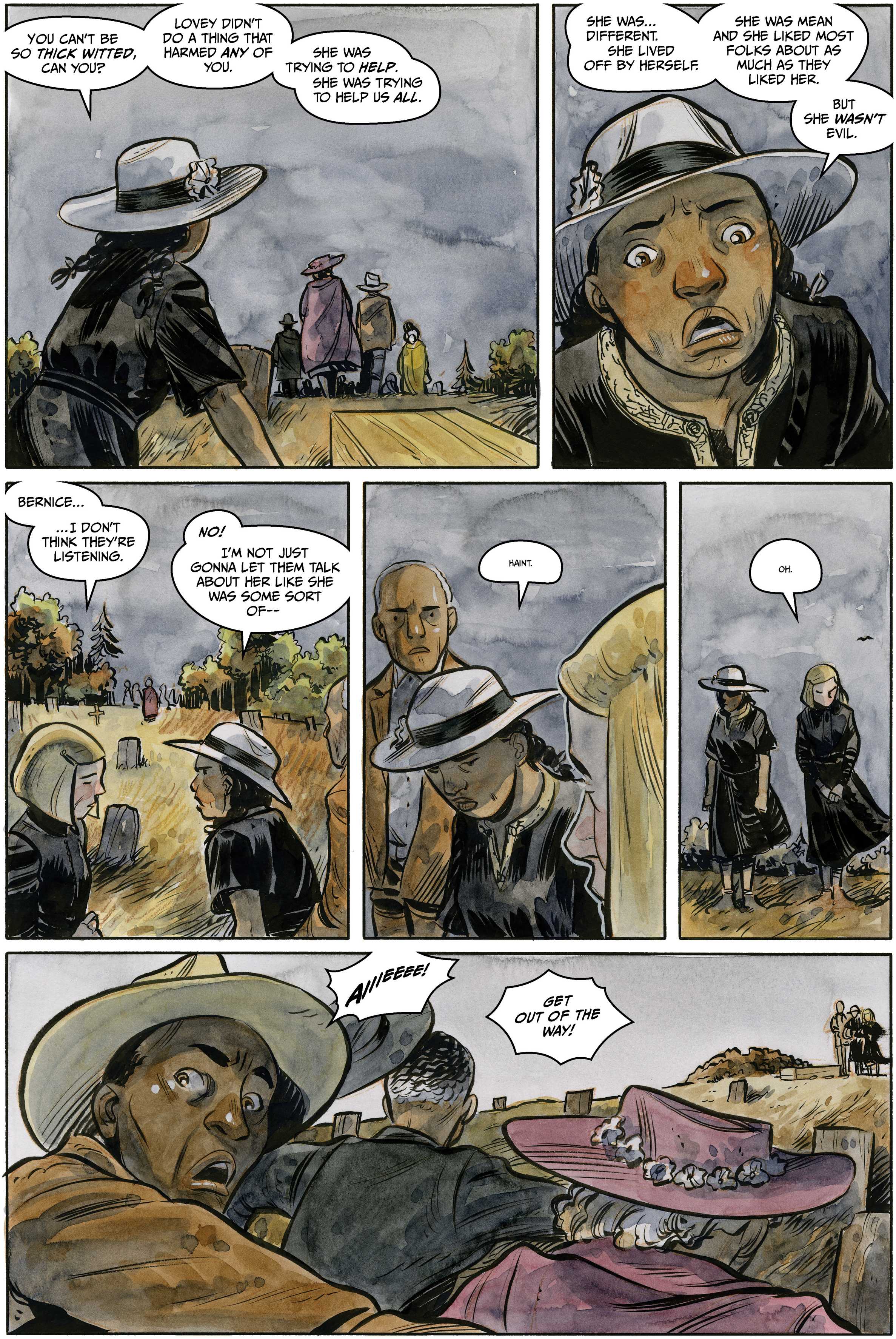

HA

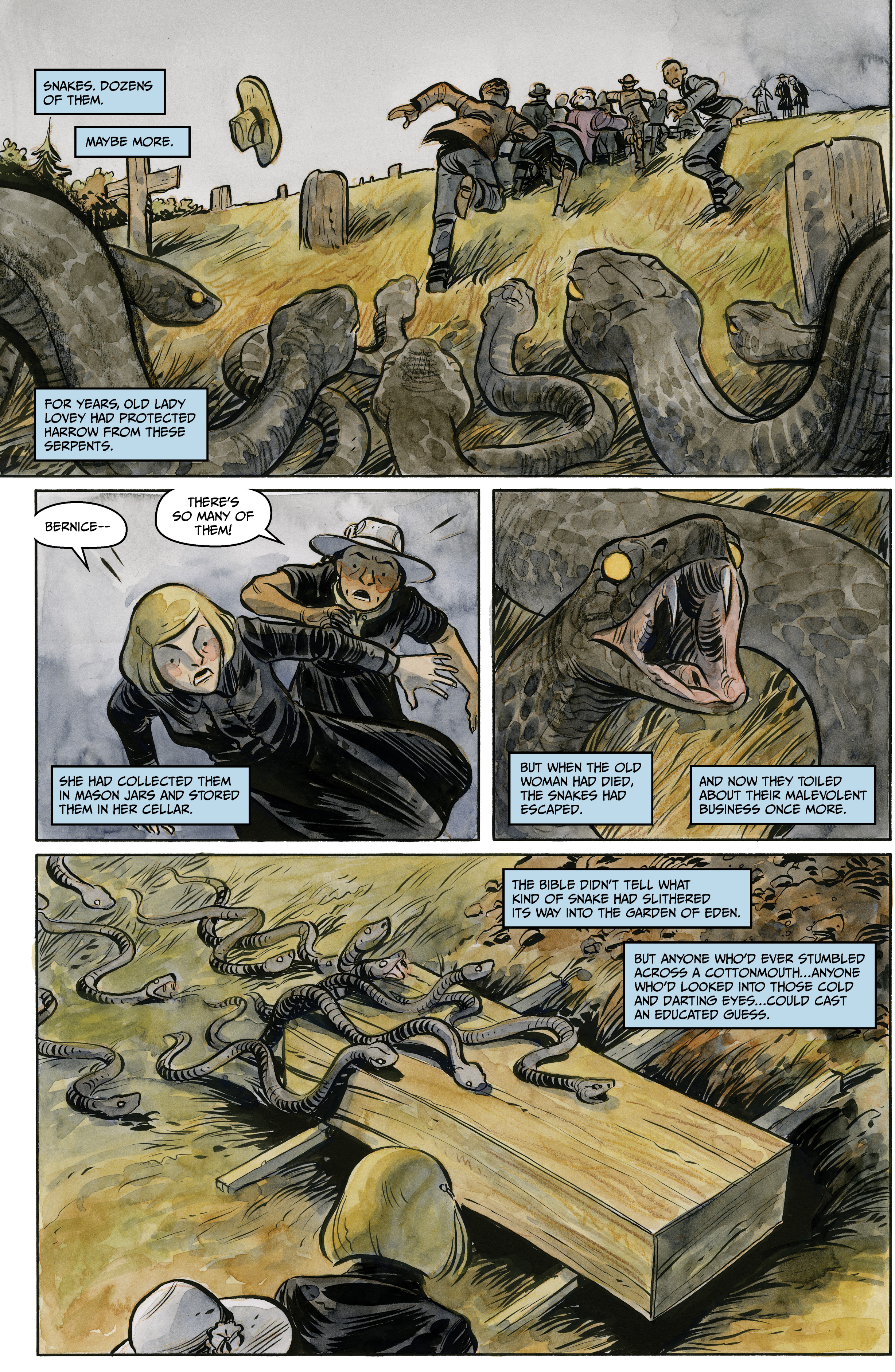

WE'VE ALL HEARD STORIES ABOUT *OLD LADY LOVEY.*
WE'VE ALL HEARD TELL HOW SHE WAS A *WITCH.*
WE'VE ALL HEARD HOW SHE WOULD CALL OUT IN THE DEAD OF THE NIGHT AND DRAW WEAK-WILLED PREY INTO THE WOODS FOR SOME *DARK PURPOSE.*
RR
OW
COU
NTY

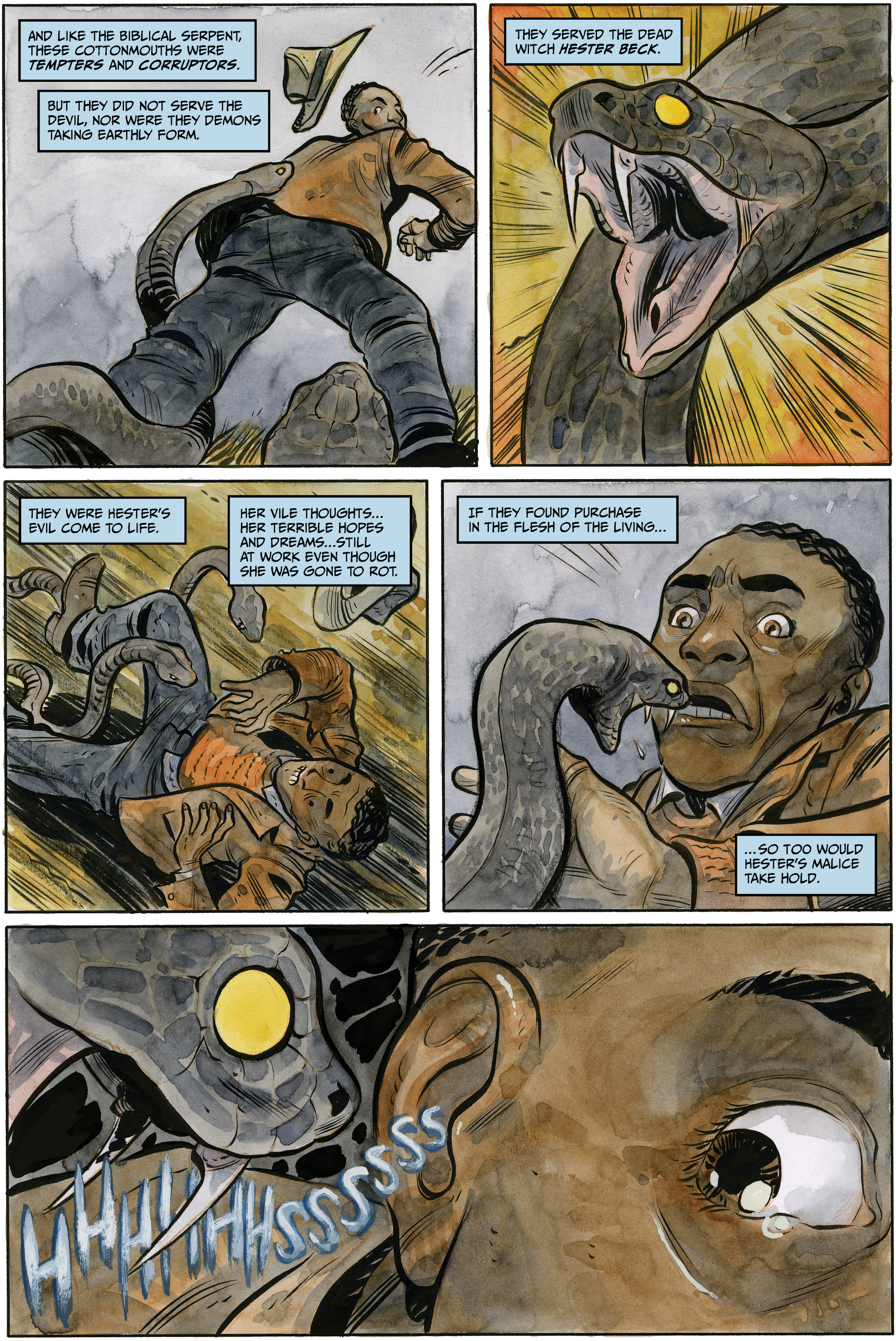

AND NOW SHE'S SUMMONED ALL OF US OUT HERE ONE LAST TIME.
ONE LAST TIME TO WITNESS HER PASSAGE TO THE HEREAFTER.
I MUST WONDER... WHAT IS IT THAT BROUGHT SO MANY OF Y'ALL OUT HERE TODAY?
IT CAN'T BE LOVE OR A SENSE OF LOSS...
...NOT FOR THIS WOMAN WHO FRIGHTENED US SO.
SO, I SPECULATE Y'ALL CAME TO MAKE SURE I DO A FAIR JOB OF LAYING THIS WOMAN TO REST.
"MAKE SURE THE GROUND'S CONSECRATED, PREACHER."
"MAKE SURE YOU SAY ALL THE RIGHT PRAYERS."
YOU WANT TO BE SURE OLD LADY LOVEY DON'T FIND HER WAY BACK TO THIS WORLD.
WELL...
...DON'T Y'ALL WORRY NONE.

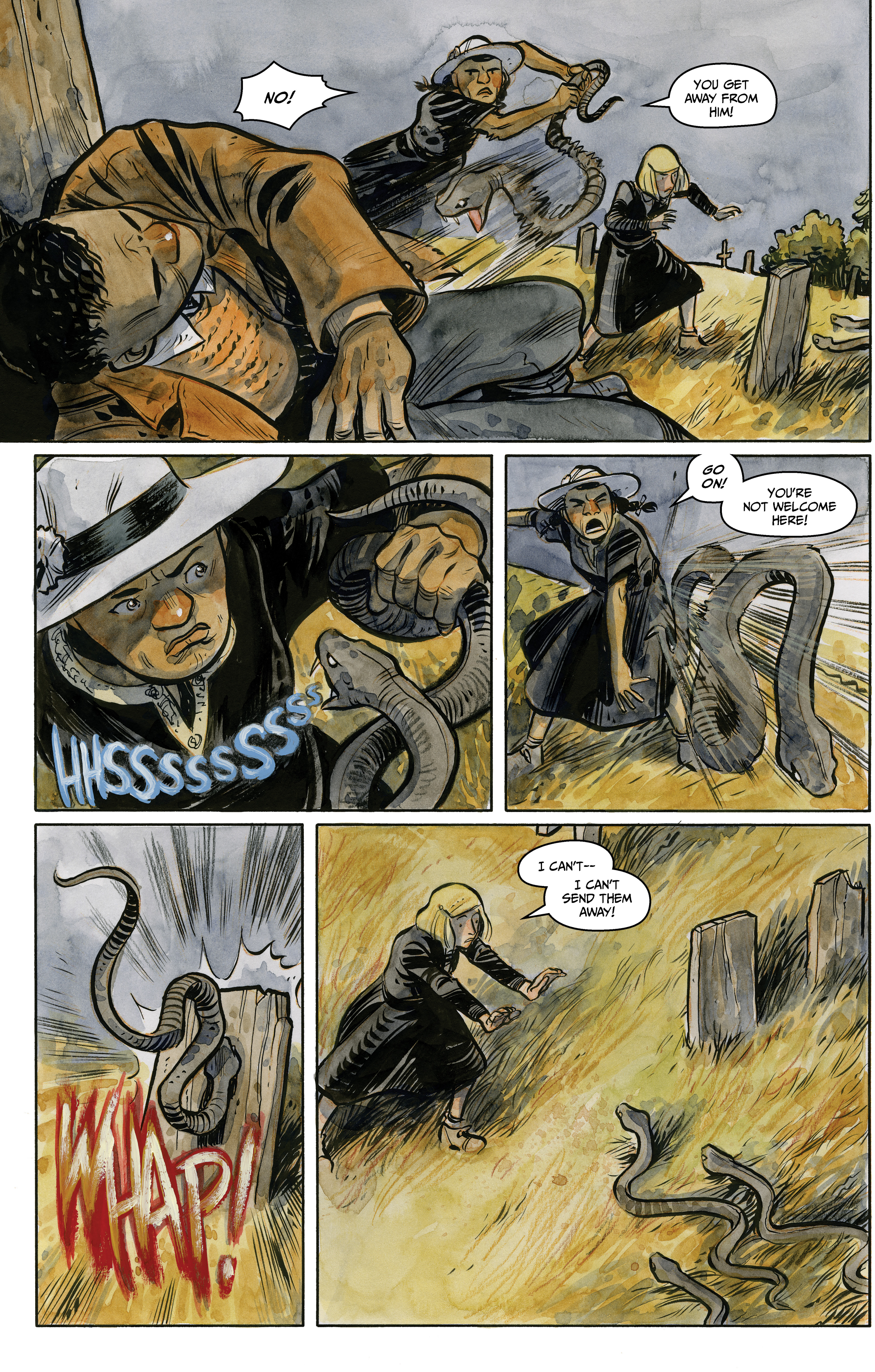

THIS AIN'T THE FIRST TIME I'VE COMMITTED AN *EVIL THING* TO THE GROUND.
IF WE LIVE TO THE LORD, THEN WE WILL DIE TO THE LORD.
BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHO DIE IN THE LORD.
THEY WILL REST FROM THEIR LABOR, FOR THEIR DEEDS WILL FOLLOW THEM.
BUT IF WE LIVE IN SERVICE OF DARK POWERS... ...THEN YOU AIN'T EVER *TRULY* ALIVE IN THE FIRST PLACE.
AND WE MUST BE CAREFUL, Y'ALL.
I CAN BLESS THIS GROUND.
I CAN CAST A WITCH'S SPIRIT INTO SHADOW.
BUT WE WON'T NEVER BE RID OF HER...
...NOT AS LONG AS SHE IS *MOURNED*.

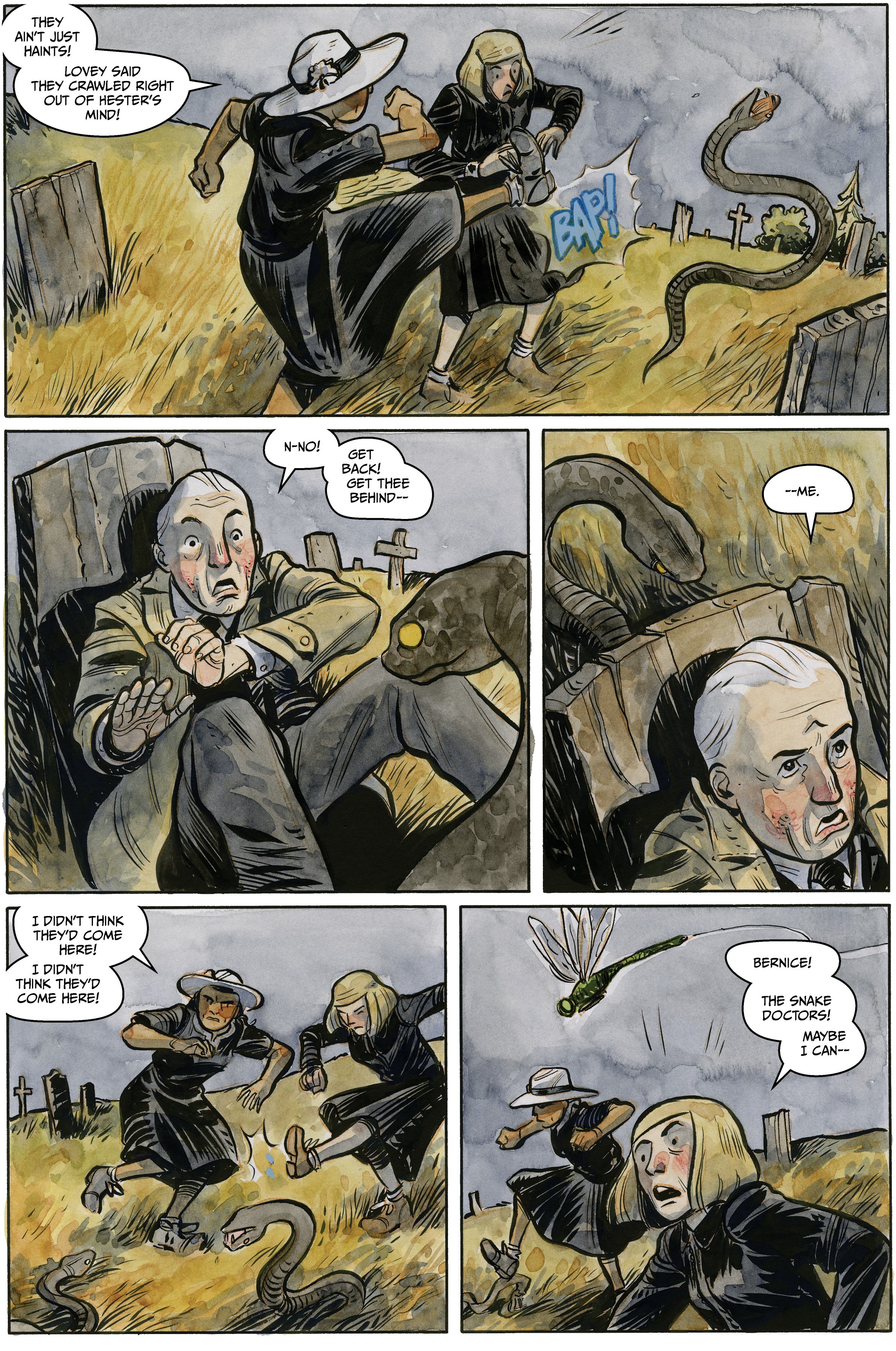

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO DIE IN THE LORD.
BUT THOSE WHO DIE IN THE SERVICE OF THE DEVIL...
...THOSE WHO TOIL IN THE DEVIL'S NAME IN LIFE...
...WILL FIND SUCH TERRIBLE, ETERNAL LABORS AWAITING THEM.
LOVEY--WE COMMIT YOUR BODY TO ITS FINAL RESTING PLACE.
WE COMMEND YOUR SOUL TO THE PUNISHMENT IT DESERVES.
ASHES TO ASHES...
DUST TO DUST.
PTU!
YOU'RE *WRONG* ABOUT HER.
YOU'RE *ALL* WRONG ABOUT HER.

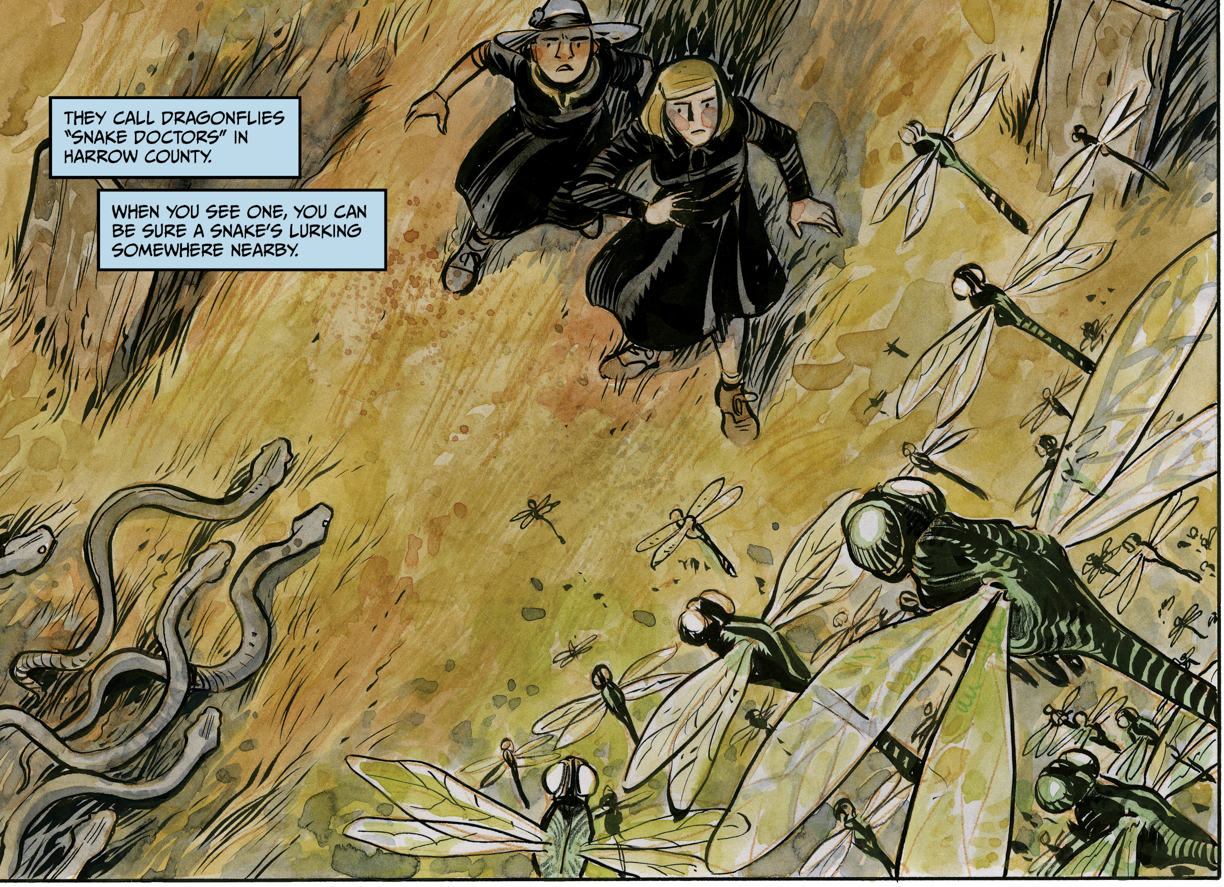

YOU CAN'T BE SO *THICK WITTED*, CAN YOU?
LOVEY DIDN'T DO A THING THAT HARMED *ANY* OF YOU.
SHE WAS TRYING TO *HELP*. SHE WAS TRYING TO HELP US *ALL*.
SHE WAS... DIFFERENT. SHE LIVED OFF BY HERSELF.
SHE WAS MEAN AND SHE LIKED MOST FOLKS ABOUT AS MUCH AS THEY LIKED HER.
BUT SHE *WASN'T* EVIL.
BERNICE...
...I DON'T THINK THEY'RE LISTENING.
NO!
I'M NOT JUST GONNA LET THEM TALK ABOUT HER LIKE SHE WAS SOME SORT OF--
HAINT.
OH.
AIIIEEEE!
GET OUT OF THE WAY!

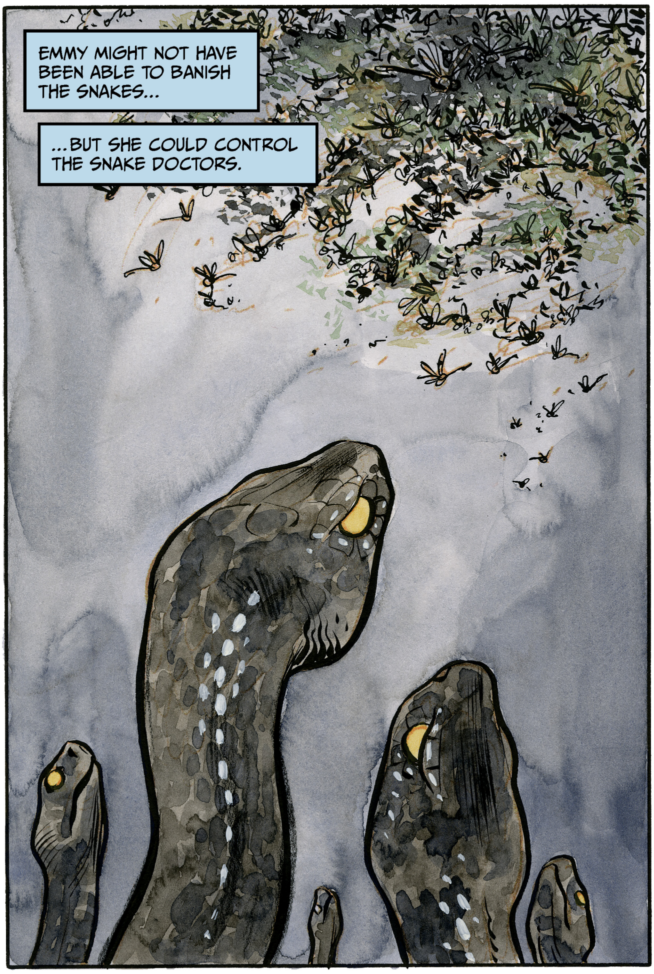

SNAKES. DOZENS OF THEM.
MAYBE MORE.
FOR YEARS, OLD LADY LOVEY HAD PROTECTED HARROW FROM THESE SERPENTS.
BERNICE--
THERE'S SO MANY OF THEM!
SHE HAD COLLECTED THEM IN MASON JARS AND STORED THEM IN HER CELLAR.
BUT WHEN THE OLD WOMAN HAD DIED, THE SNAKES HAD ESCAPED.
AND NOW THEY TOILED ABOUT THEIR MALEVOLENT BUSINESS ONCE MORE.
THE BIBLE DIDN'T TELL WHAT KIND OF SNAKE HAD SLITHERED ITS WAY INTO THE GARDEN OF EDEN.
BUT ANYONE WHO'D EVER STUMBLED ACROSS A COTTONMOUTH...ANYONE WHO'D LOOKED INTO THOSE COLD AND DARTING EYES...COULD CAST AN EDUCATED GUESS.

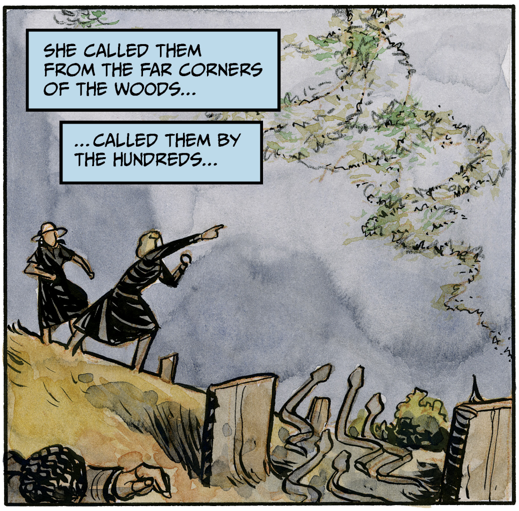

AND LIKE THE BIBLICAL SERPENT, THESE COTTONMOUTHS WERE *TEMPTERS* AND *CORRUPTORS*.
BUT THEY DID NOT SERVE THE DEVIL, NOR WERE THEY DEMONS TAKING EARTHLY FORM.
THEY SERVED THE DEAD WITCH *HESTER BECK*.
THEY WERE HESTER'S EVIL COME TO LIFE.
HER VILE THOUGHTS... HER TERRIBLE HOPES AND DREAMS...STILL AT WORK EVEN THOUGH SHE WAS GONE TO ROT.
IF THEY FOUND PURCHASE IN THE FLESH OF THE LIVING...
...SO TOO WOULD HESTER'S MALICE TAKE HOLD.
HHHHHHSSSSSSS

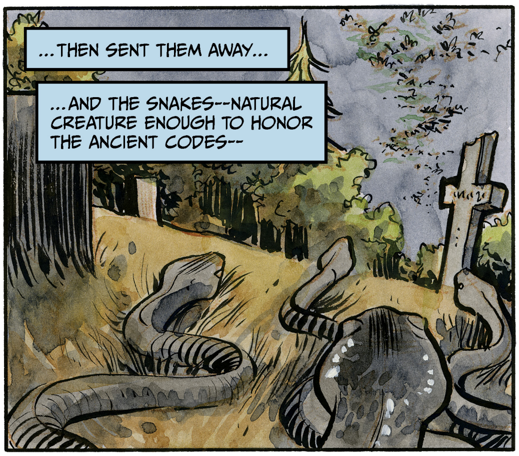

NO!
YOU GET AWAY FROM HIM!
HHSSSSSSSSSS
GO ON!
YOU'RE NOT WELCOME HERE!
WHAP!
I CAN'T--
I CAN'T SEND THEM AWAY!

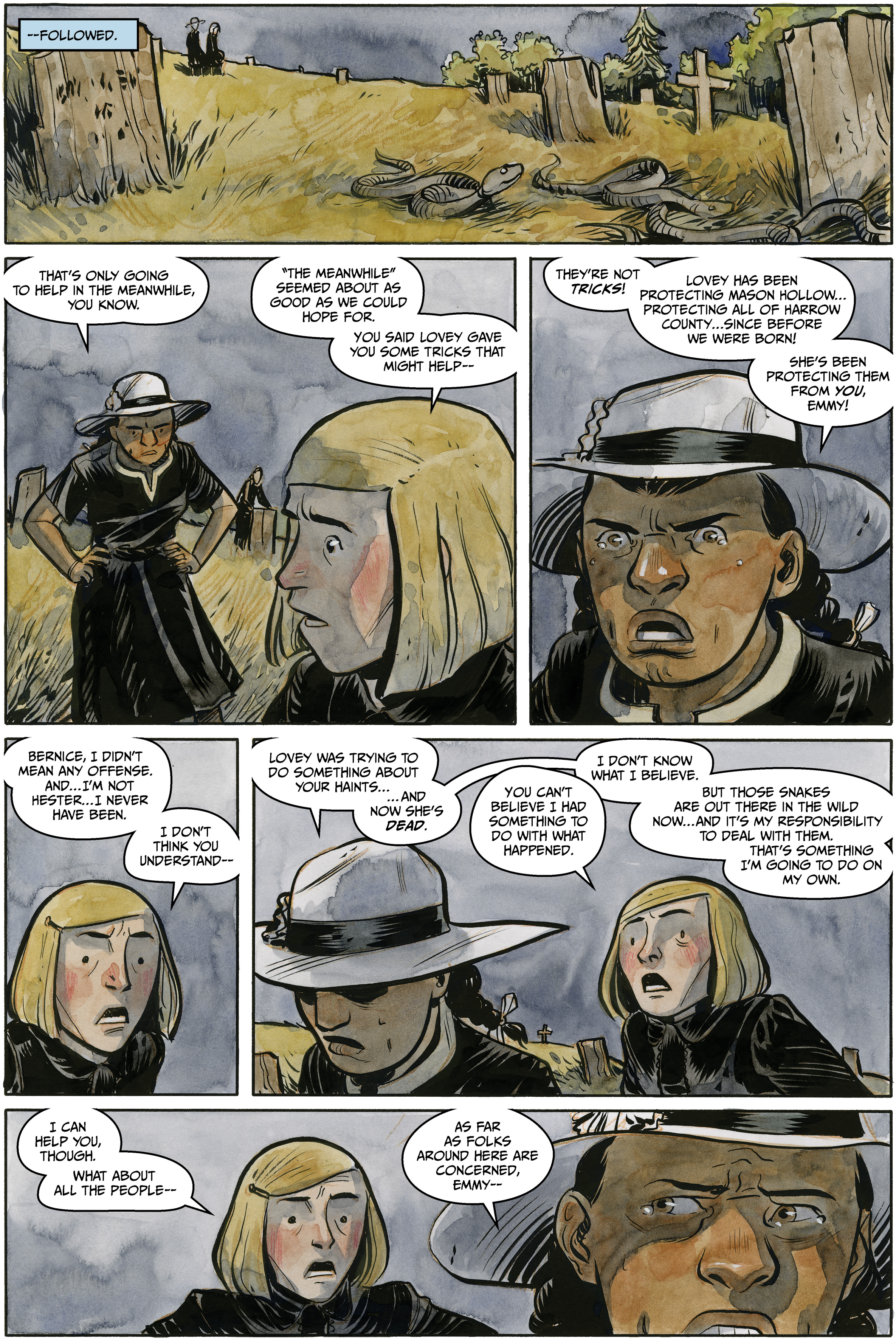

THEY AIN'T JUST HAINTS!
LOVEY SAID THEY CRAWLED RIGHT OUT OF HESTER'S MIND!
BAP!
N-NO!
GET BACK! GET THEE BEHIND--
--ME.
I DIDN'T THINK THEY'D COME HERE!
I DIDN'T THINK THEY'D COME HERE!
BERNICE!
THE SNAKE DOCTORS!
MAYBE I CAN--

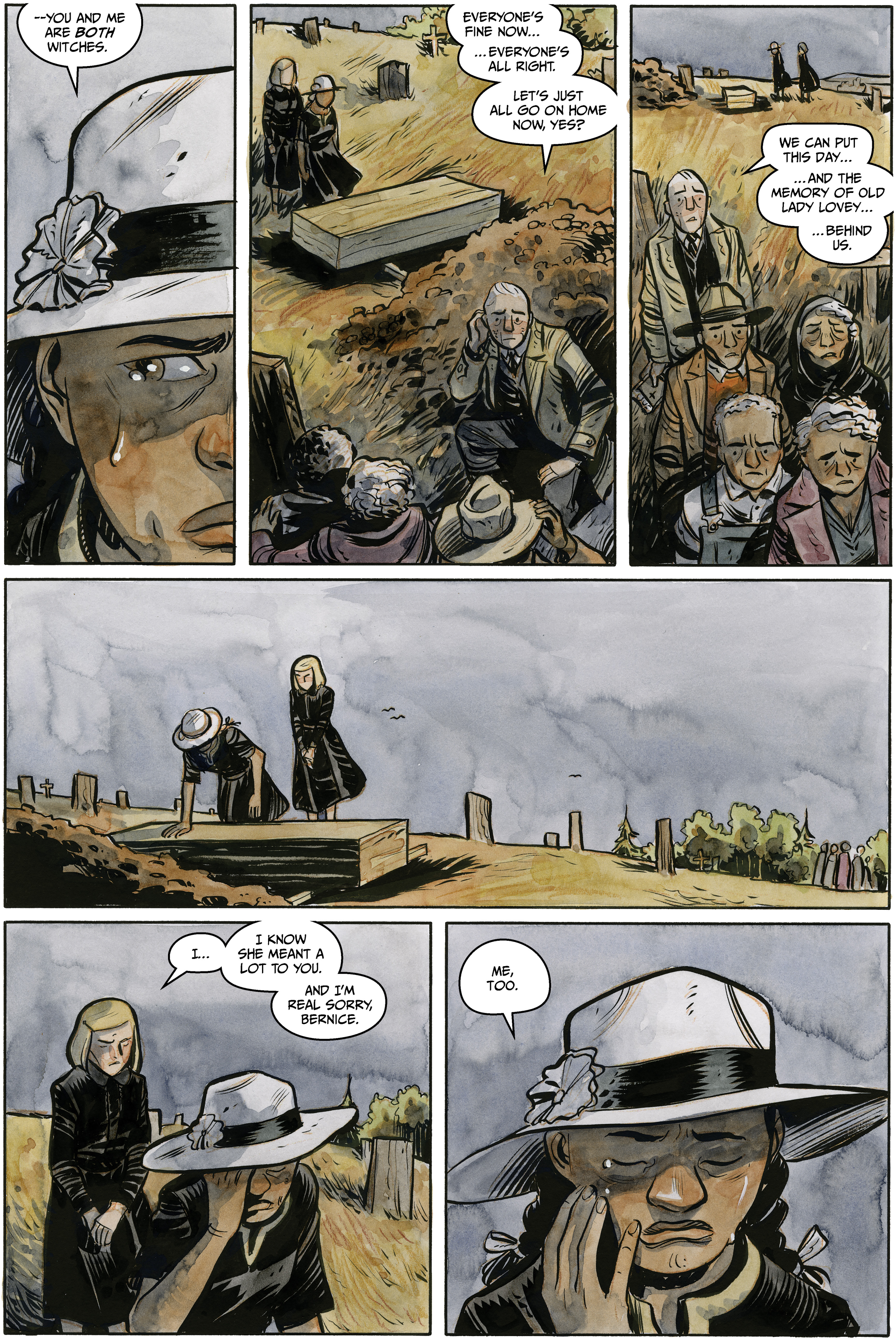

THEY CALL DRAGONFLIES "SNAKE DOCTORS" IN HARROW COUNTY.
WHEN YOU SEE ONE, YOU CAN BE SURE A SNAKE'S LURKING SOMEWHERE NEARBY.

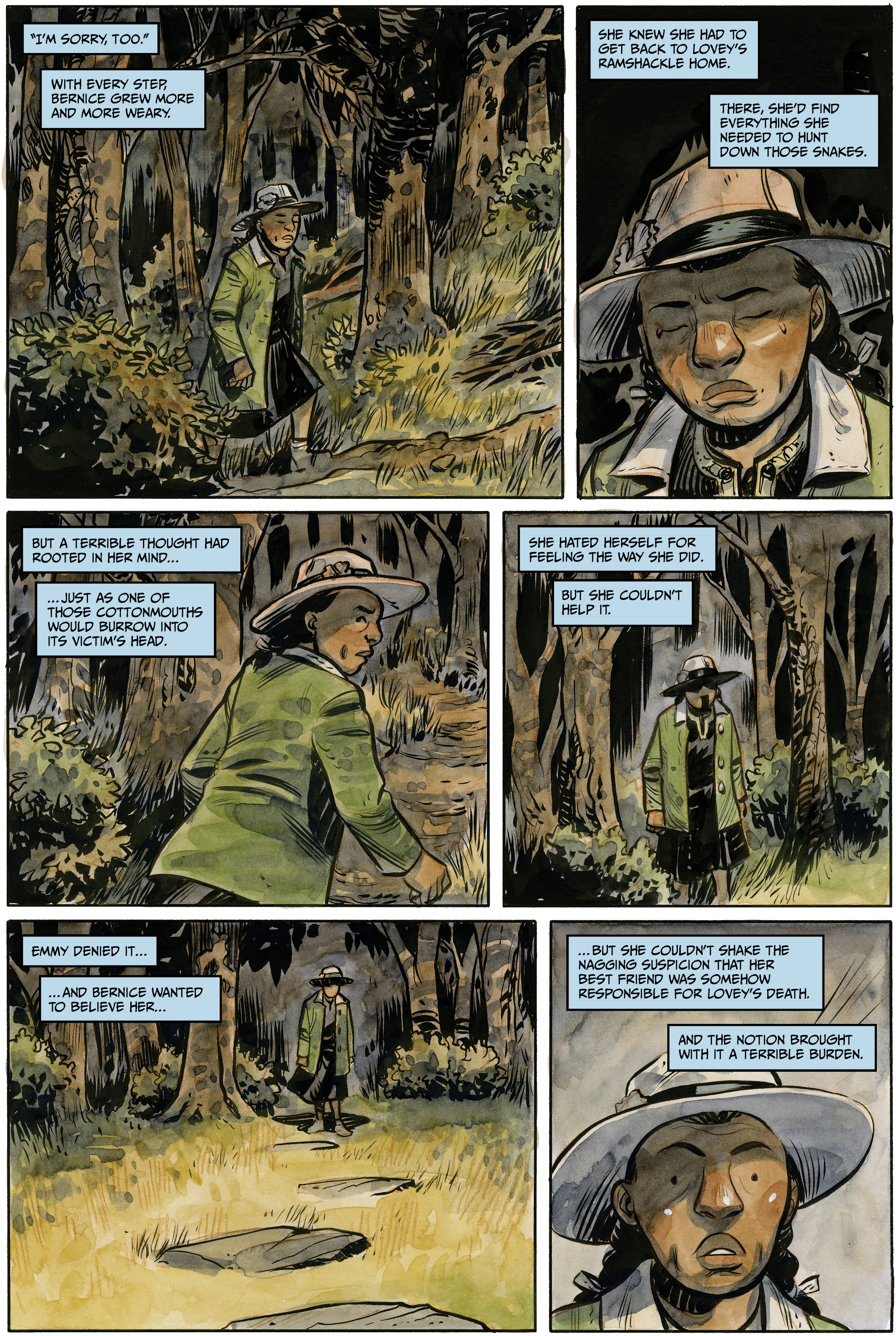

EMMY MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO BANISH THE SNAKES...
...BUT SHE COULD CONTROL THE SNAKE DOCTORS.

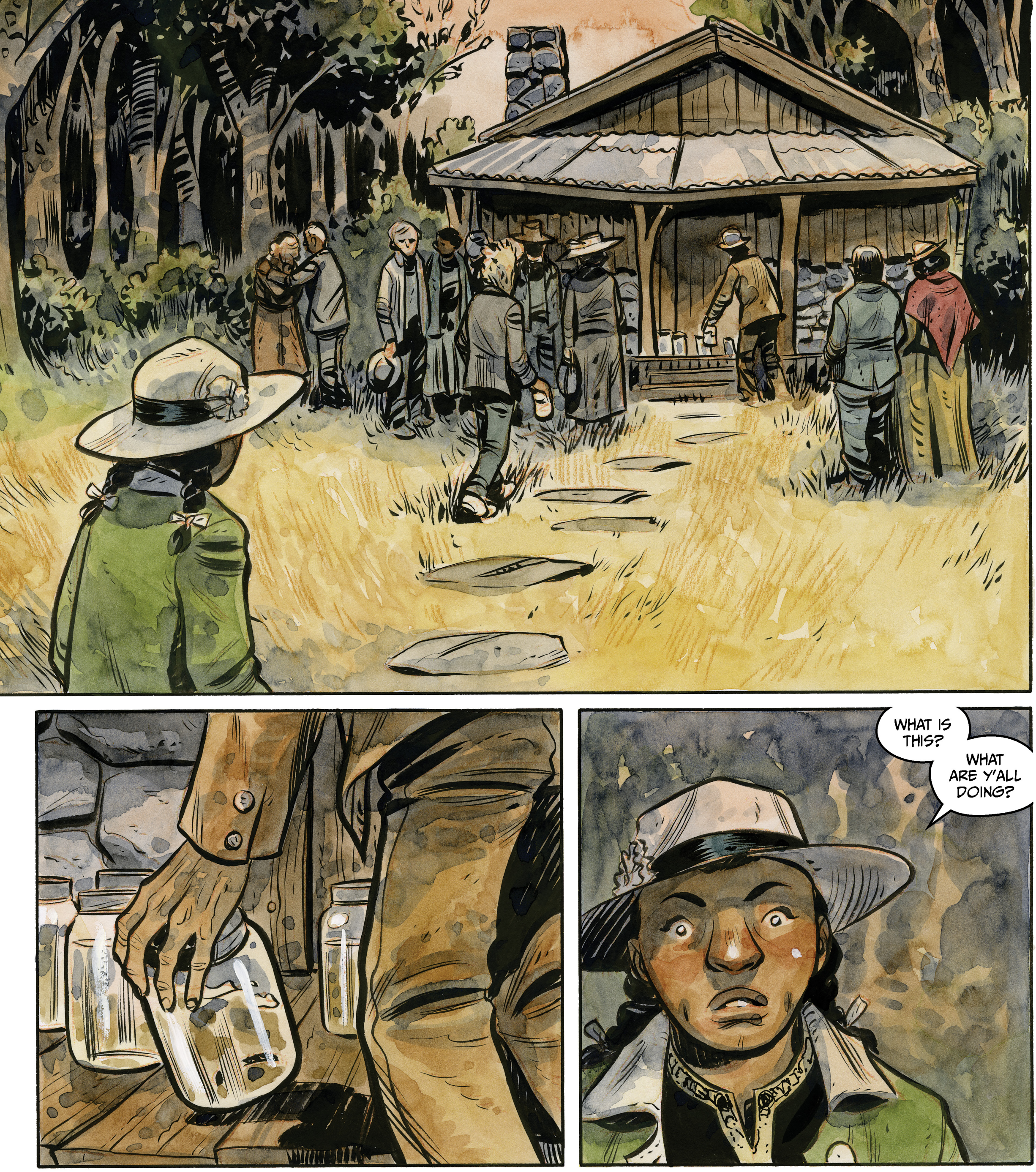

SHE CALLED THEM FROM THE FAR CORNERS OF THE WOODS...
...CALLED THEM BY THE HUNDREDS...

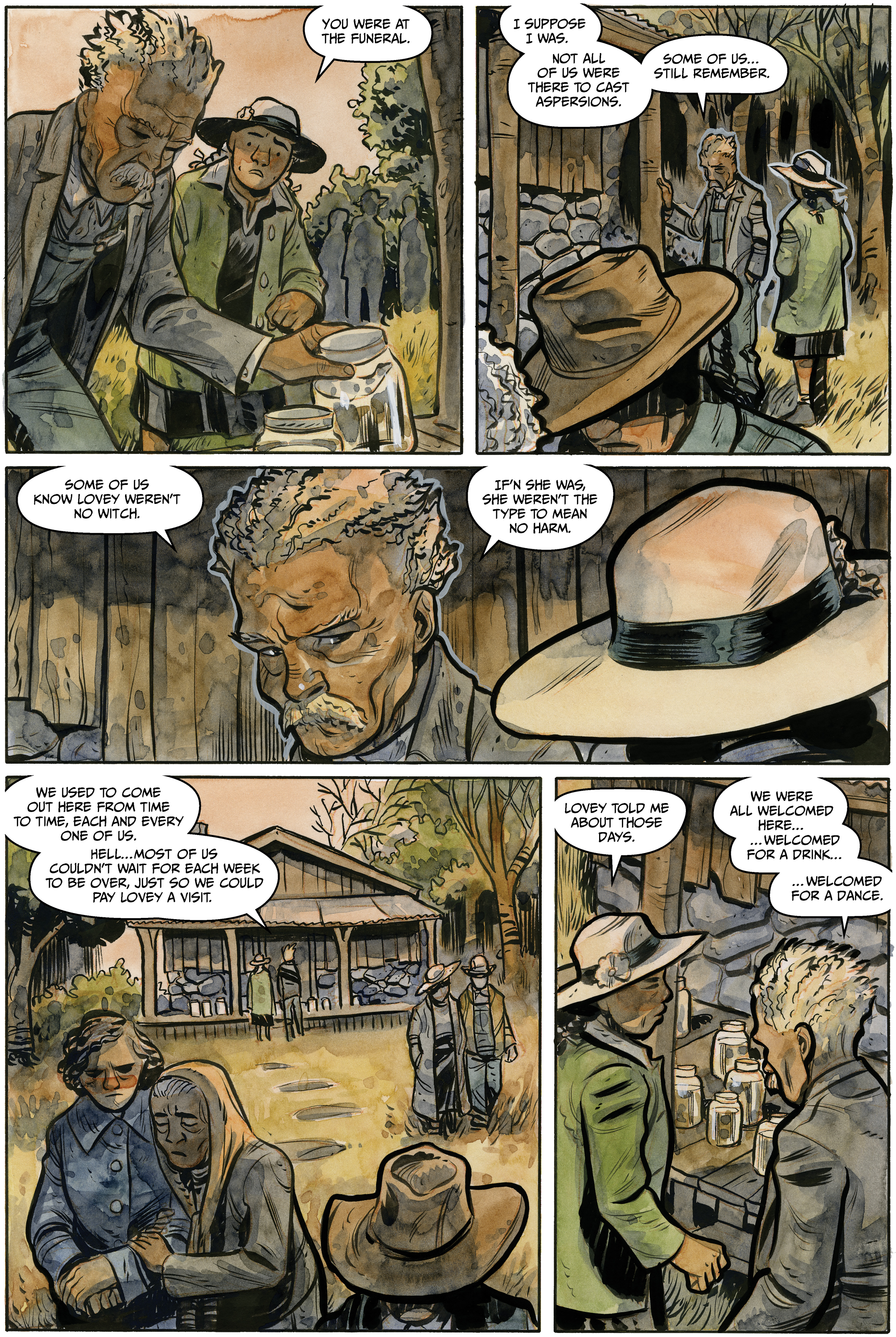

...THEN SENT THEM AWAY...
...AND THE SNAKES--NATURAL CREATURE ENOUGH TO HONOR THE ANCIENT CODES--

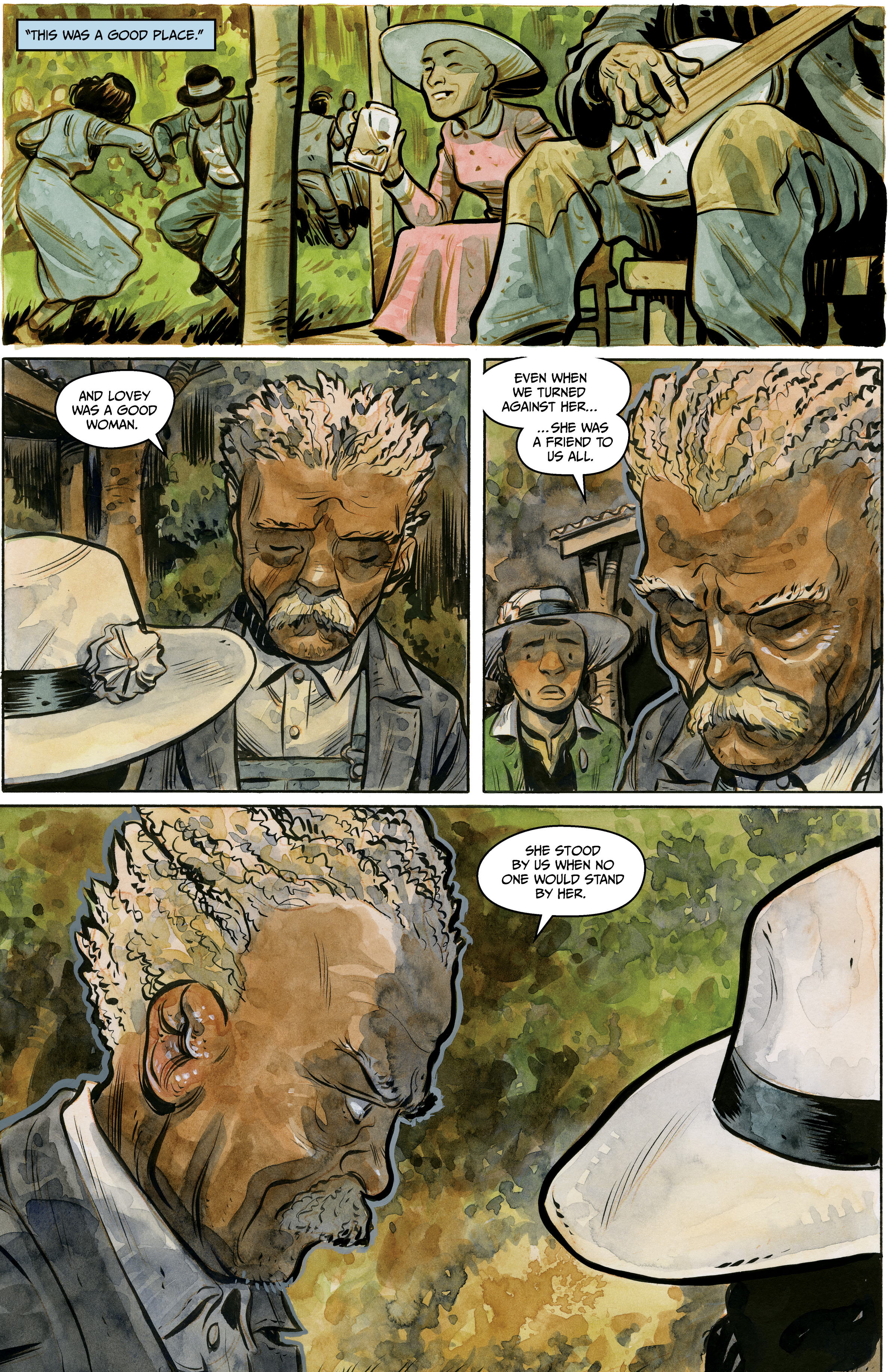

--FOLLOWED.
THAT'S ONLY GOING TO HELP IN THE MEANWHILE, YOU KNOW.
"THE MEANWHILE" SEEMED ABOUT AS GOOD AS WE COULD HOPE FOR.
YOU SAID LOVEY GAVE YOU SOME TRICKS THAT MIGHT HELP--
THEY'RE NOT *TRICKS*!
LOVEY HAS BEEN PROTECTING MASON HOLLOW... PROTECTING ALL OF HARROW COUNTY...SINCE BEFORE WE WERE BORN!
SHE'S BEEN PROTECTING THEM FROM *YOU*, EMMY!
BERNICE, I DIDN'T MEAN ANY OFFENSE. AND...I'M NOT HESTER...I NEVER HAVE BEEN.
I DON'T THINK YOU UNDERSTAND--
LOVEY WAS TRYING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR HAINTS...
...AND NOW SHE'S *DEAD*.
YOU CAN'T BELIEVE I HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH WHAT HAPPENED.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I BELIEVE.
BUT THOSE SNAKES ARE OUT THERE IN THE WILD NOW...AND IT'S MY RESPONSIBILITY TO DEAL WITH THEM.
THAT'S SOMETHING I'M GOING TO DO ON MY OWN.
I CAN HELP YOU, THOUGH.
WHAT ABOUT ALL THE PEOPLE--
AS FAR AS FOLKS AROUND HERE ARE CONCERNED, EMMY--

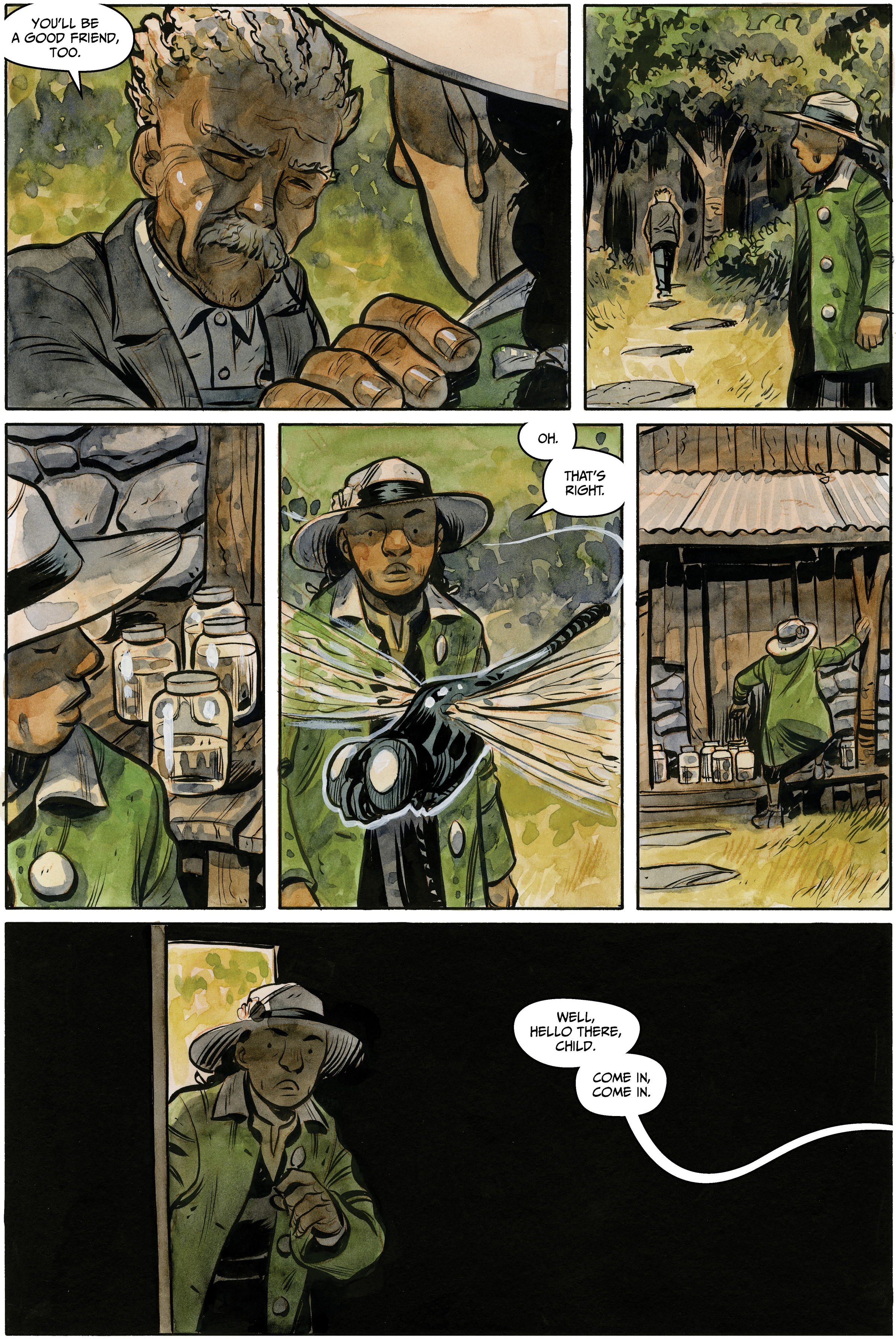

--YOU AND ME ARE *BOTH* WITCHES.
EVERYONE'S FINE NOW...
...EVERYONE'S ALL RIGHT.
LET'S JUST ALL GO ON HOME NOW, YES?
WE CAN PUT THIS DAY...
...AND THE MEMORY OF OLD LADY LOVEY...
...BEHIND US.
I...
I KNOW SHE MEANT A LOT TO YOU.
AND I'M REAL SORRY, BERNICE.
ME, TOO.

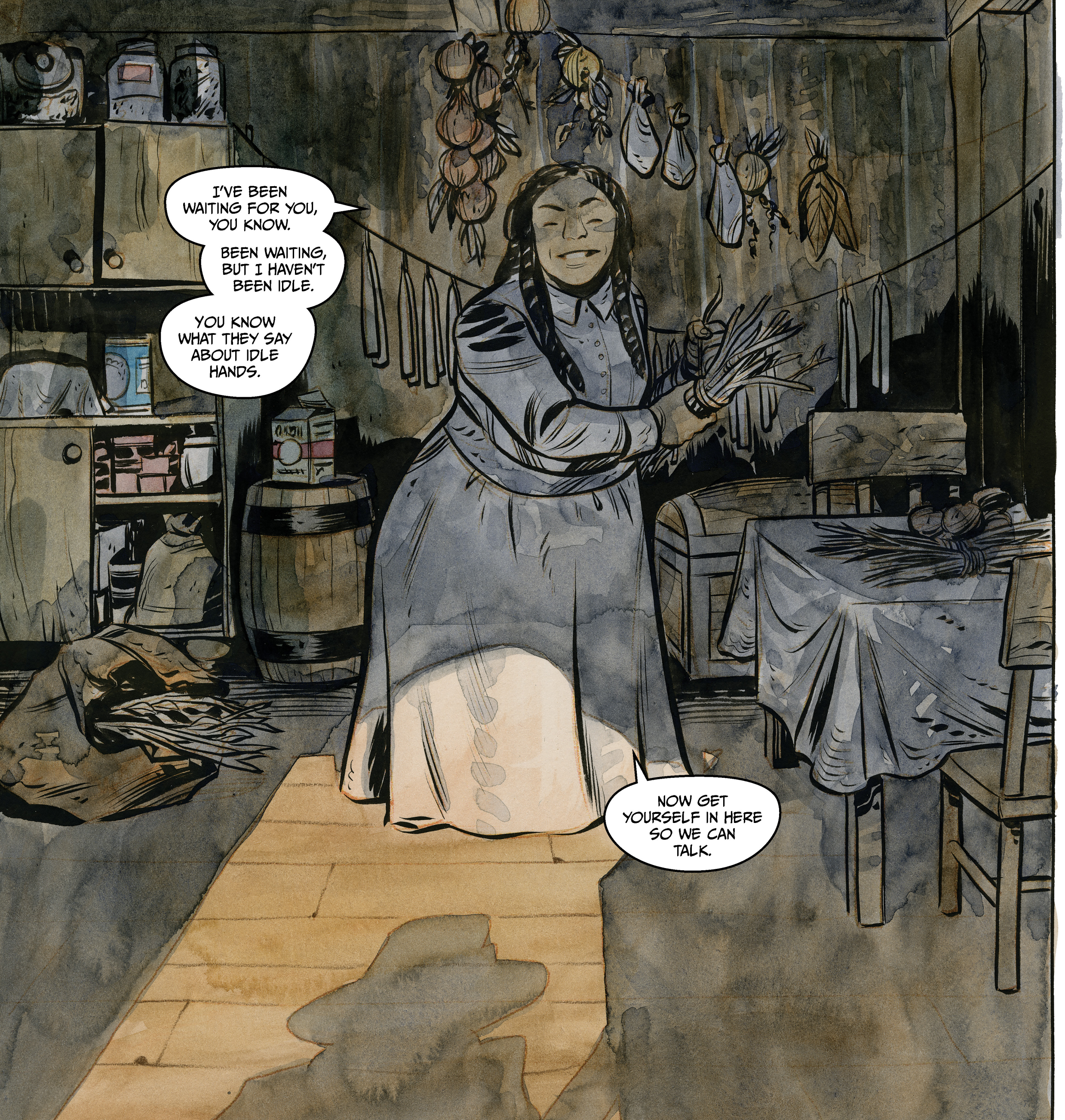

"I'M SORRY, TOO."
WITH EVERY STEP, BERNICE GREW MORE AND MORE WEARY.
SHE KNEW SHE HAD TO GET BACK TO LOVEY'S RAMSHACKLE HOME.
THERE, SHE'D FIND EVERYTHING SHE NEEDED TO HUNT DOWN THOSE SNAKES.
BUT A TERRIBLE THOUGHT HAD ROOTED IN HER MIND...
...JUST AS ONE OF THOSE COTTONMOUTHS WOULD BURROW INTO ITS VICTIM'S HEAD.
SHE HATED HERSELF FOR FEELING THE WAY SHE DID.
BUT SHE COULDN'T HELP IT.
EMMY DENIED IT...
...AND BERNICE WANTED TO BELIEVE HER...
...BUT SHE COULDN'T SHAKE THE NAGGING SUSPICION THAT HER BEST FRIEND WAS SOMEHOW RESPONSIBLE FOR LOVEY'S DEATH.
AND THE NOTION BROUGHT WITH IT A TERRIBLE BURDEN.

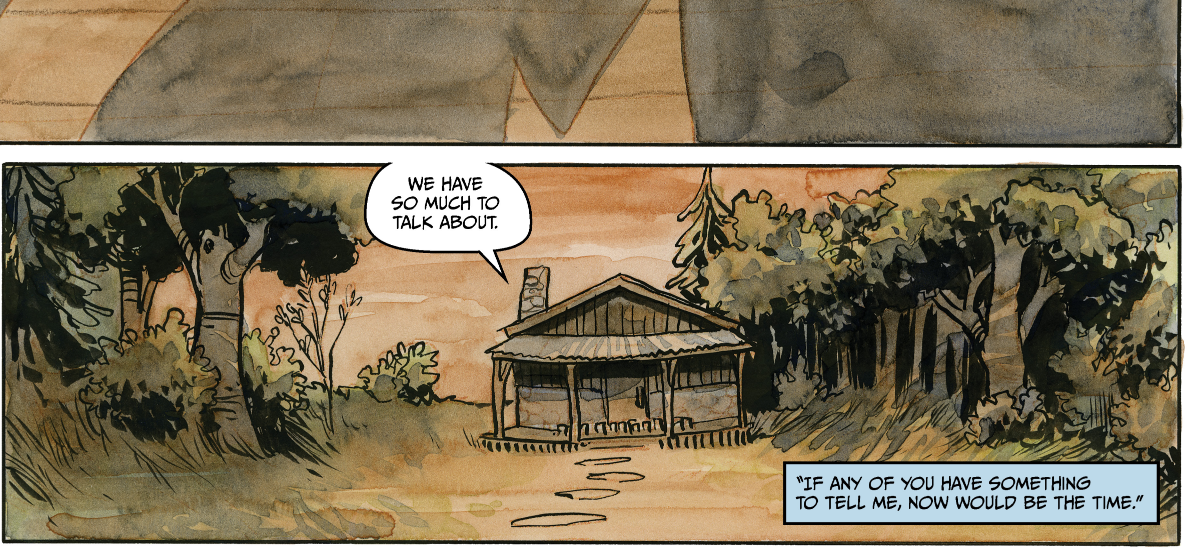

WHAT IS THIS?
WHAT ARE Y'ALL DOING?
JUST PAYING OUR *RESPECTS.*

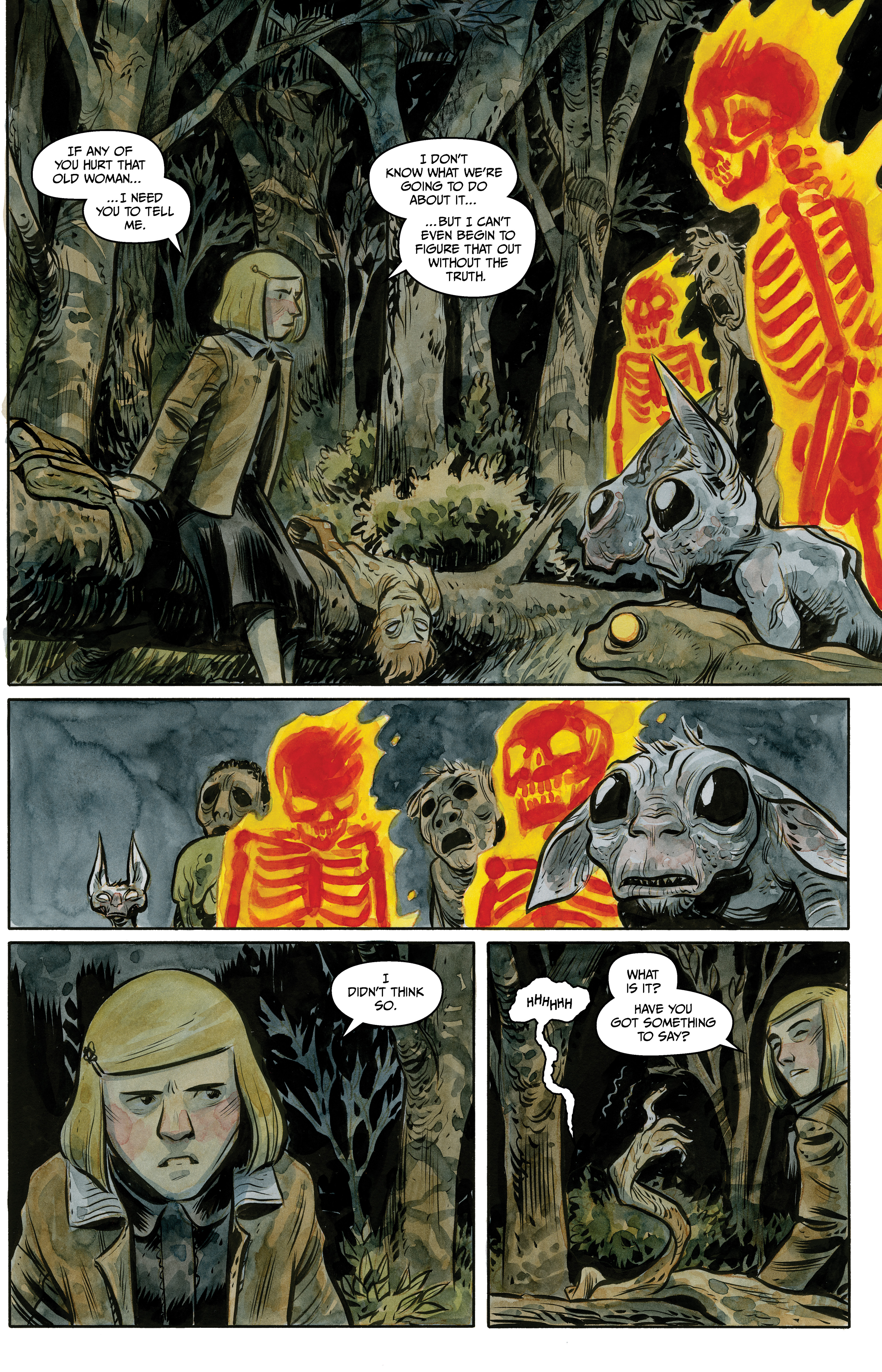

YOU WERE AT THE FUNERAL.
I SUPPOSE I WAS.
NOT ALL OF US WERE THERE TO CAST ASPERSIONS.
SOME OF US... STILL REMEMBER.
SOME OF US KNOW LOVEY WEREN'T NO WITCH.
IF'N SHE WAS, SHE WEREN'T THE TYPE TO MEAN NO HARM.
WE USED TO COME OUT HERE FROM TIME TO TIME, EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US.
HELL...MOST OF US COULDN'T WAIT FOR EACH WEEK TO BE OVER, JUST SO WE COULD PAY LOVEY A VISIT.
LOVEY TOLD ME ABOUT THOSE DAYS.
WE WERE ALL WELCOMED HERE...
...WELCOMED FOR A DRINK...
...WELCOMED FOR A DANCE.

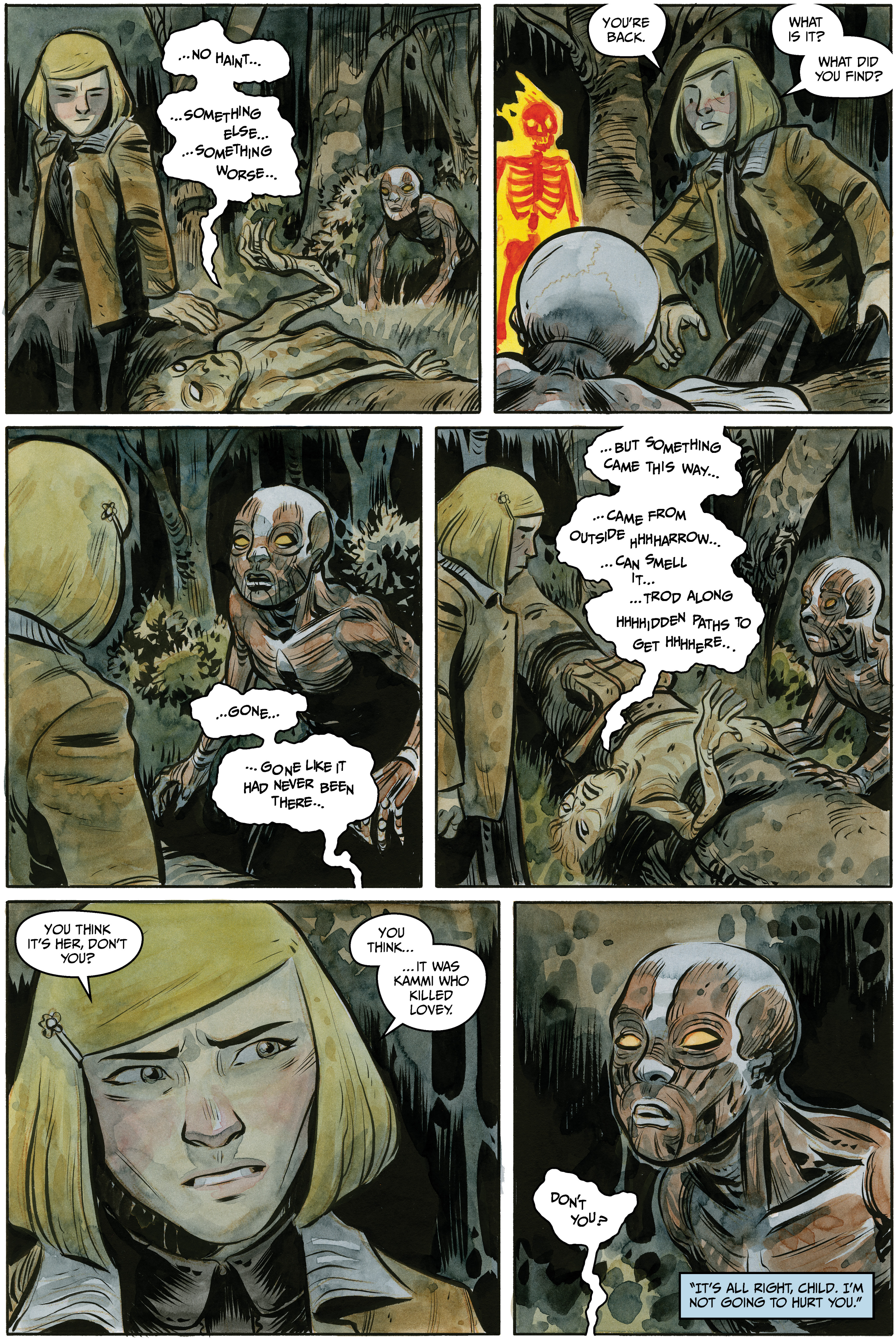

"THIS WAS A GOOD PLACE."
AND LOVEY WAS A GOOD WOMAN.
EVEN WHEN WE TURNED AGAINST HER...
...SHE WAS A FRIEND TO US ALL.
SHE STOOD BY US WHEN NO ONE WOULD STAND BY HER.

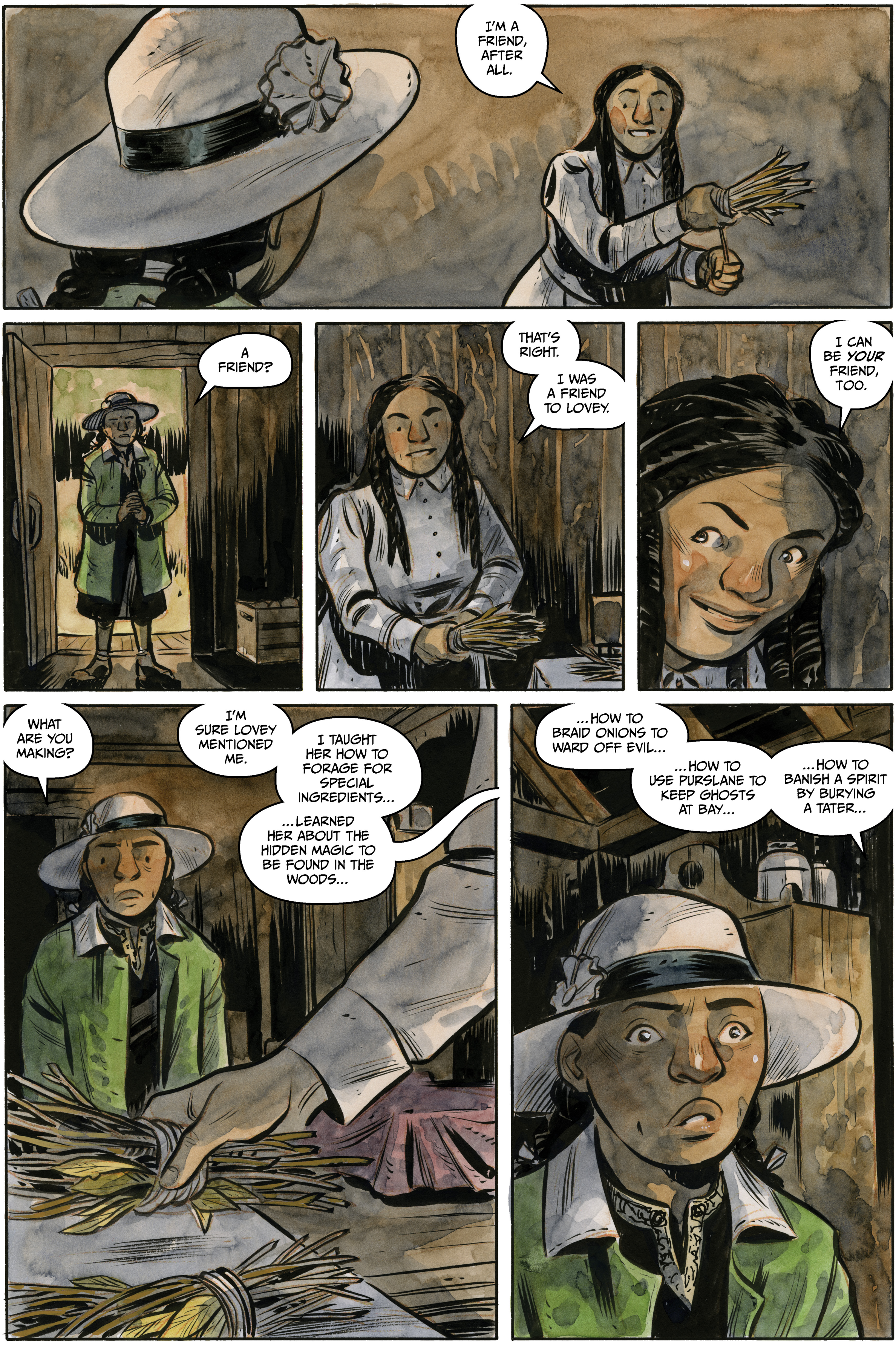

YOU'LL BE A GOOD FRIEND, TOO.
OH.
THAT'S RIGHT.
WELL, HELLO THERE, CHILD.
COME IN, COME IN.

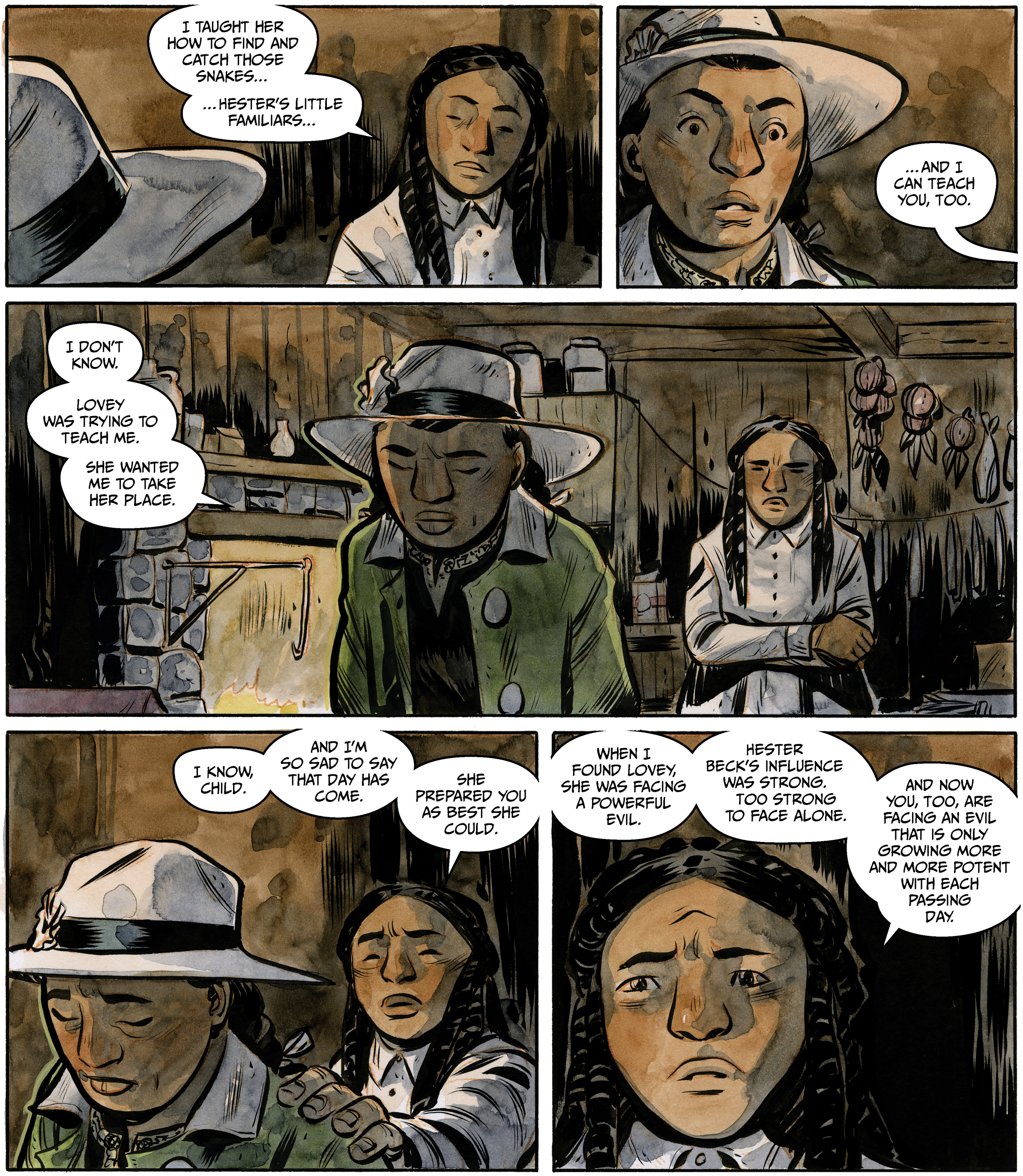

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU, YOU KNOW.
BEEN WAITING, BUT I HAVEN'T BEEN IDLE.
YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT IDLE HANDS.
NOW GET YOURSELF IN HERE SO WE CAN TALK.


WE HAVE SO MUCH TO TALK ABOUT.
"IF ANY OF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL ME, NOW WOULD BE THE TIME."

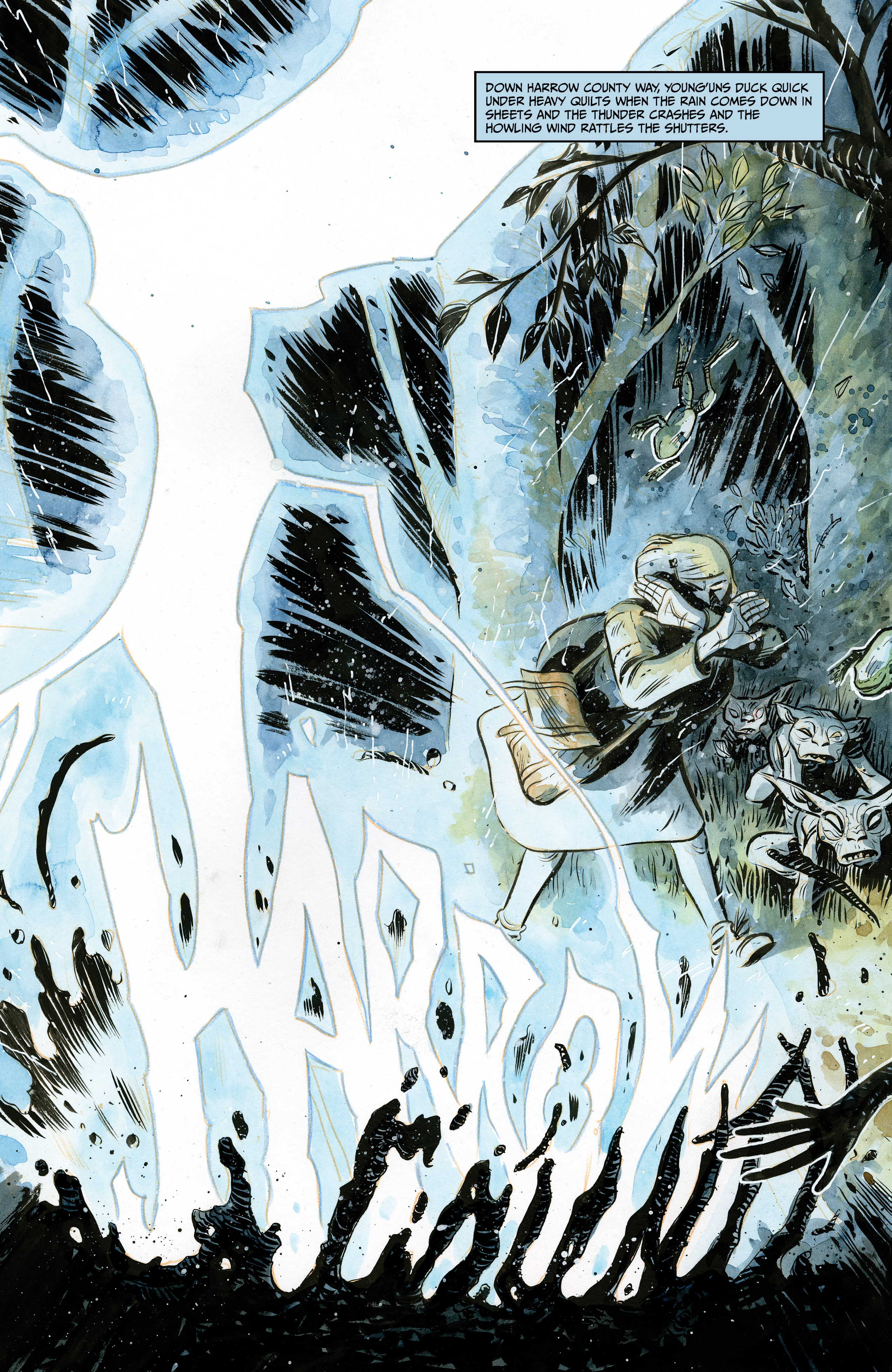

IF ANY OF YOU HURT THAT OLD WOMAN...
...I NEED YOU TO TELL ME.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT...
...BUT I CAN'T EVEN BEGIN TO FIGURE THAT OUT WITHOUT THE TRUTH.
I DIDN'T THINK SO.
HHHHHH
WHAT IS IT?
HAVE YOU GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?

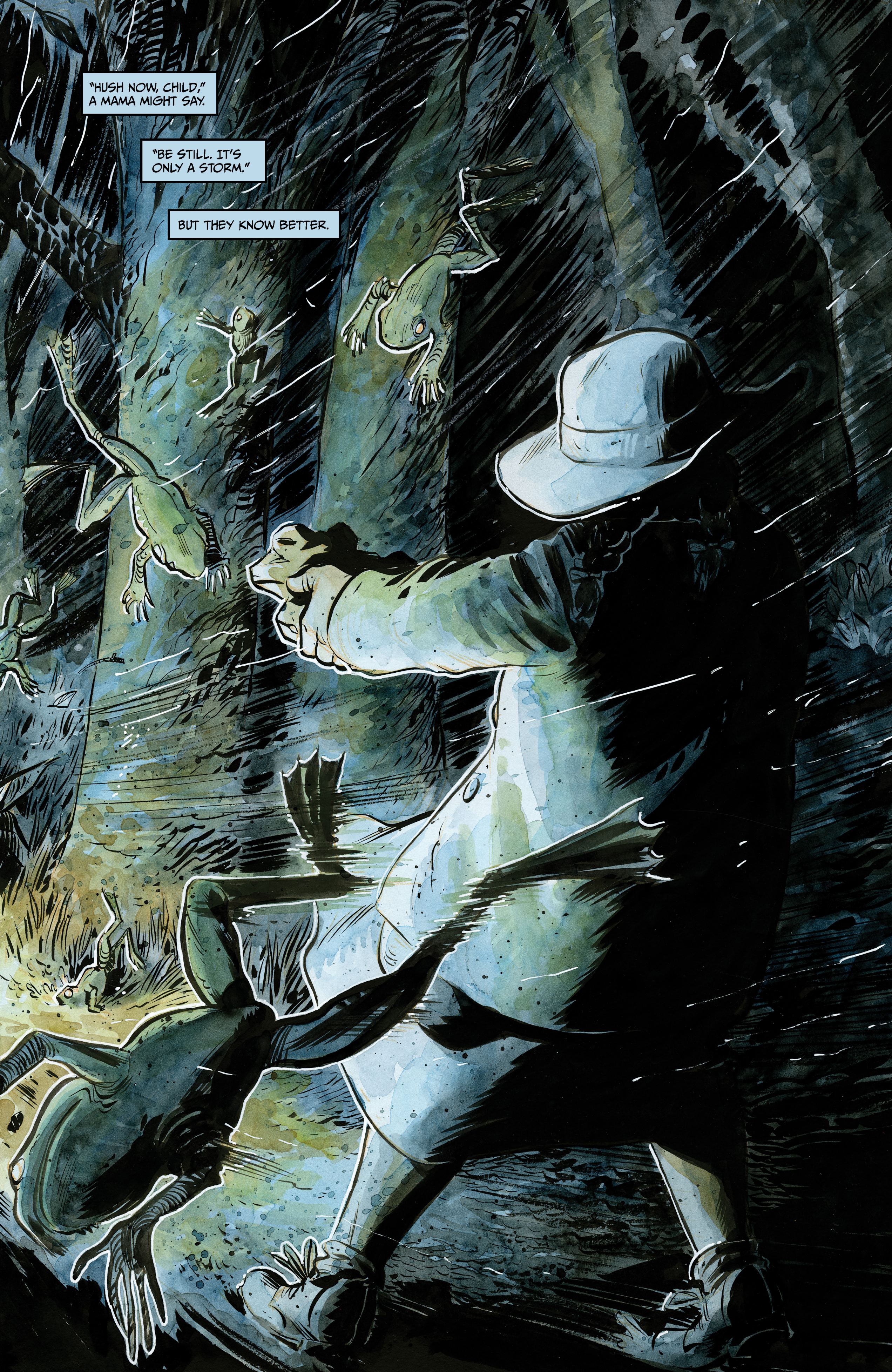

...NO HAINT...
...SOMETHING ELSE... ...SOMETHING WORSE...
YOU'RE BACK.
WHAT IS IT?
WHAT DID YOU FIND?
...GONE...
...GONE LIKE IT HAD NEVER BEEN THERE...
...BUT SOMETHING CAME THIS WAY...
...CAME FROM OUTSIDE HHHHARROW...
...CAN SMELL IT...
...TROD ALONG HHHHIDDEN PATHS TO GET HHHHERE...
YOU THINK IT'S HER, DON'T YOU?
YOU THINK...
...IT WAS KAMMI WHO KILLED LOVEY.
DON'T YOU?
"IT'S ALL RIGHT, CHILD. I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU."

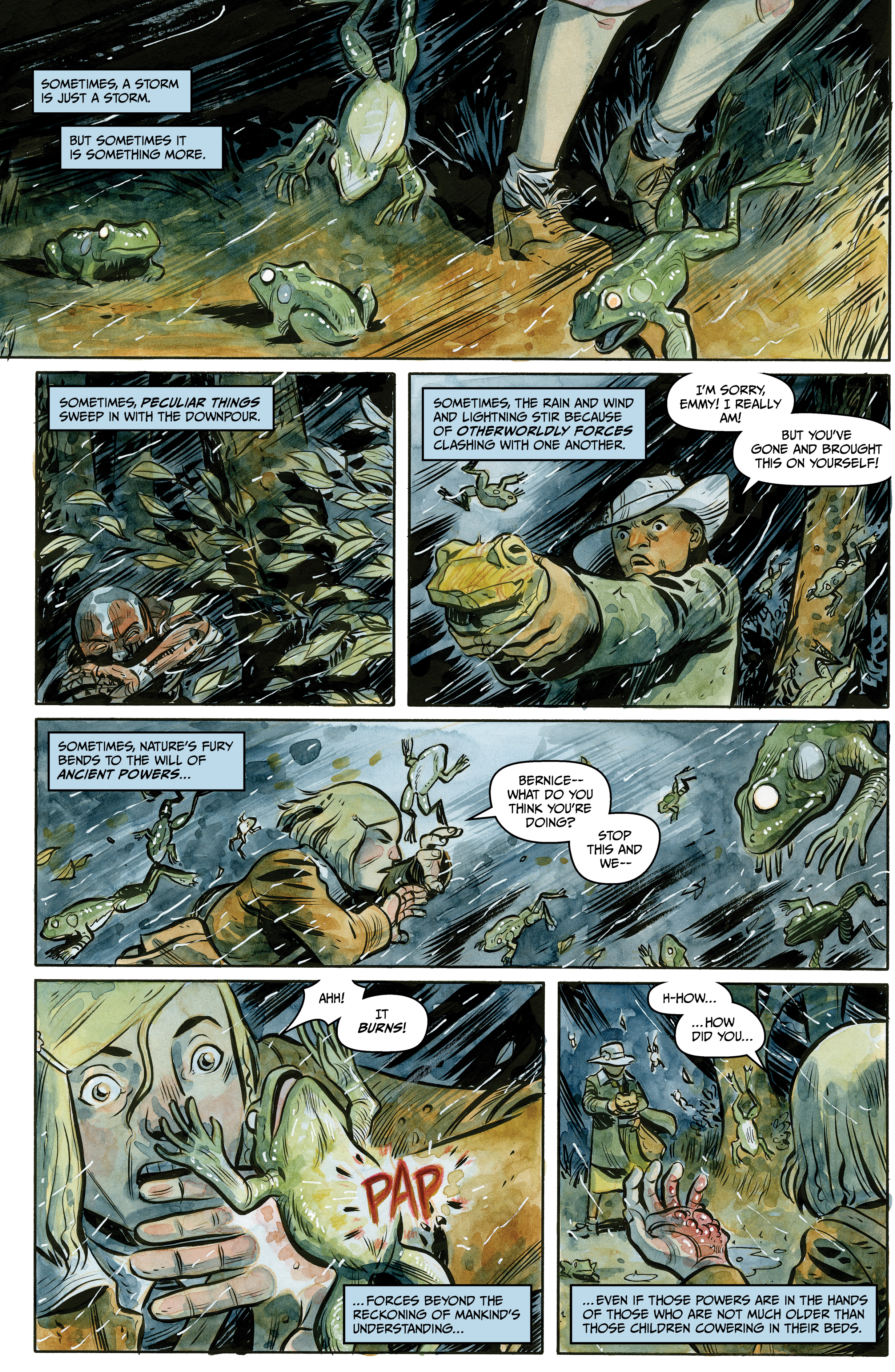

I'M A FRIEND, AFTER ALL.
A FRIEND?
THAT'S RIGHT.
I WAS A FRIEND TO LOVEY.
I CAN BE *YOUR* FRIEND, TOO.
WHAT ARE YOU MAKING?
I'M SURE LOVEY MENTIONED ME.
I TAUGHT HER HOW TO FORAGE FOR SPECIAL INGREDIENTS...
...LEARNED HER ABOUT THE HIDDEN MAGIC TO BE FOUND IN THE WOODS...
...HOW TO BRAID ONIONS TO WARD OFF EVIL...
...HOW TO USE PURSLANE TO KEEP GHOSTS AT BAY...
...HOW TO BANISH A SPIRIT BY BURYING A TATER...

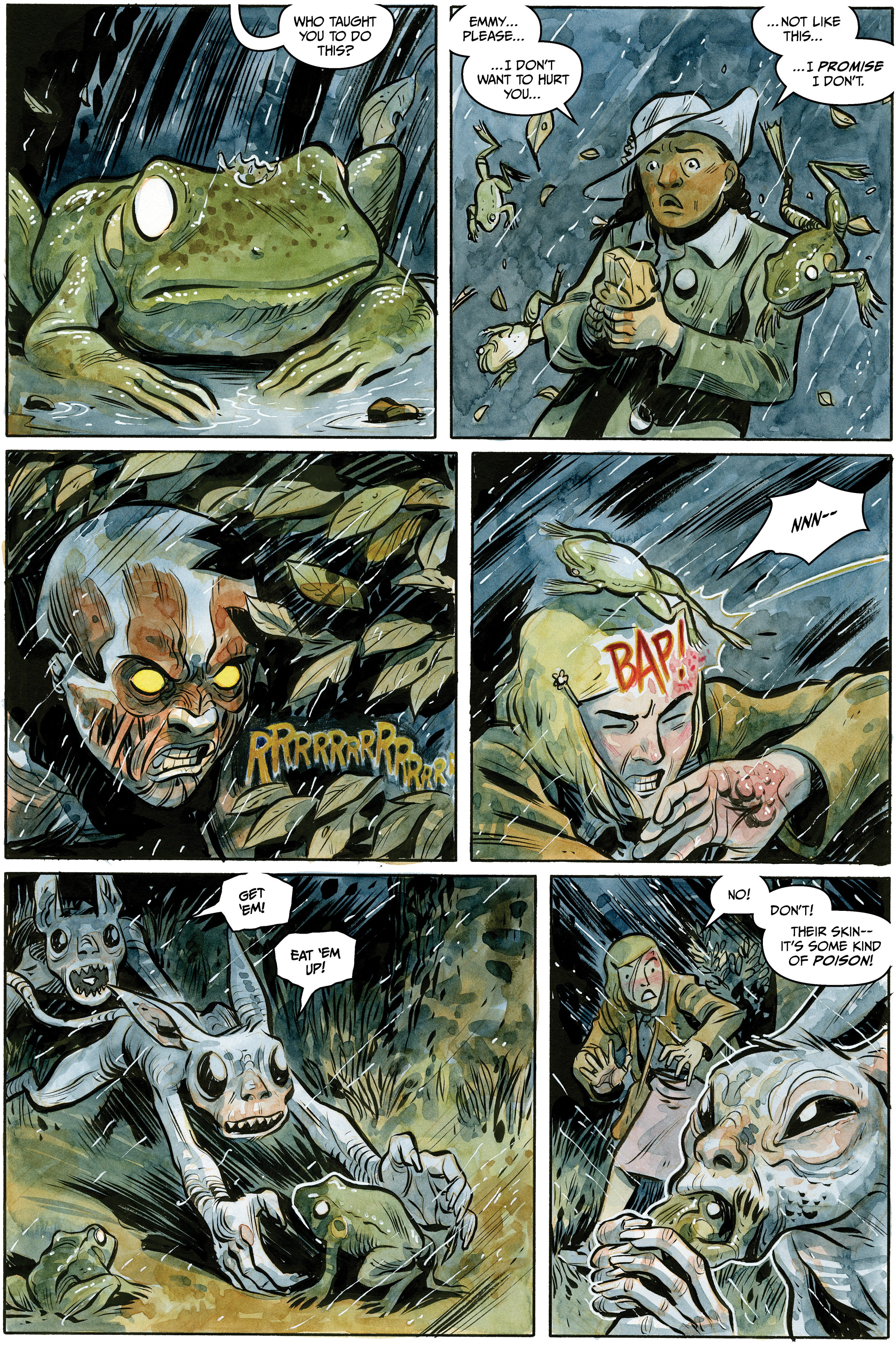

I TAUGHT HER HOW TO FIND AND CATCH THOSE SNAKES...
...HESTER'S LITTLE FAMILIARS...
...AND I CAN TEACH YOU, TOO.
I DON'T KNOW.
LOVEY WAS TRYING TO TEACH ME.
SHE WANTED ME TO TAKE HER PLACE.
I KNOW, CHILD.
AND I'M SO SAD TO SAY THAT DAY HAS COME.
SHE PREPARED YOU AS BEST SHE COULD.
WHEN I FOUND LOVEY, SHE WAS FACING A POWERFUL EVIL.
HESTER BECK'S INFLUENCE WAS STRONG. TOO STRONG TO FACE ALONE.
AND NOW YOU, TOO, ARE FACING AN EVIL THAT IS ONLY GROWING MORE AND MORE POTENT WITH EACH PASSING DAY.
BUT YOU DON'T NEED TO FACE THIS DARKNESS ALONE.
I'M GOING TO HELP YOU, CHILD.
I'M GOING TO HELP YOU RID HARROW COUNTY OF AN UNGODLY POWER...
...I'M GOING TO TEACH YOU HOW TO DEAL WITH EMMY ONCE AND FOR ALL TIME.

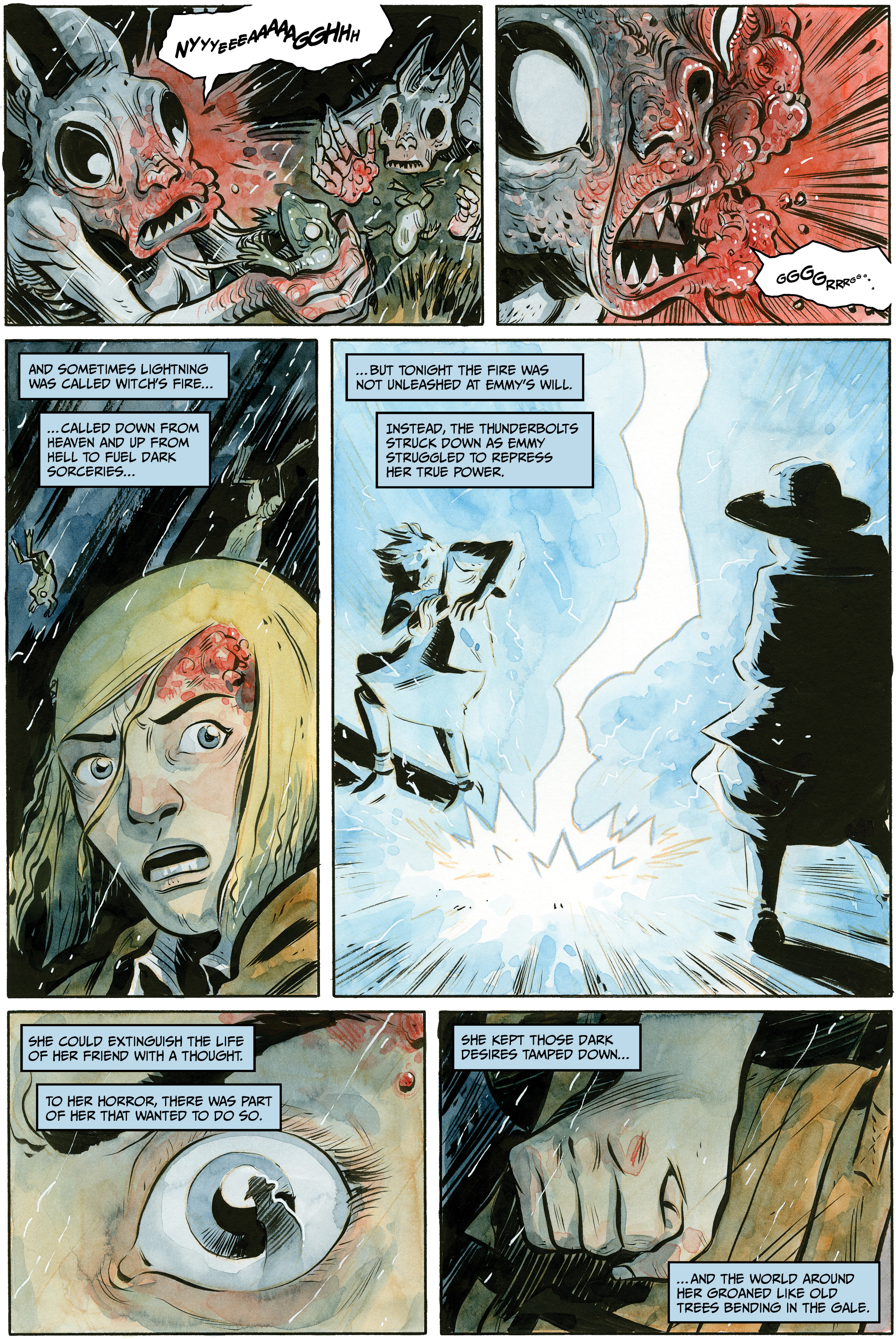
FOUR

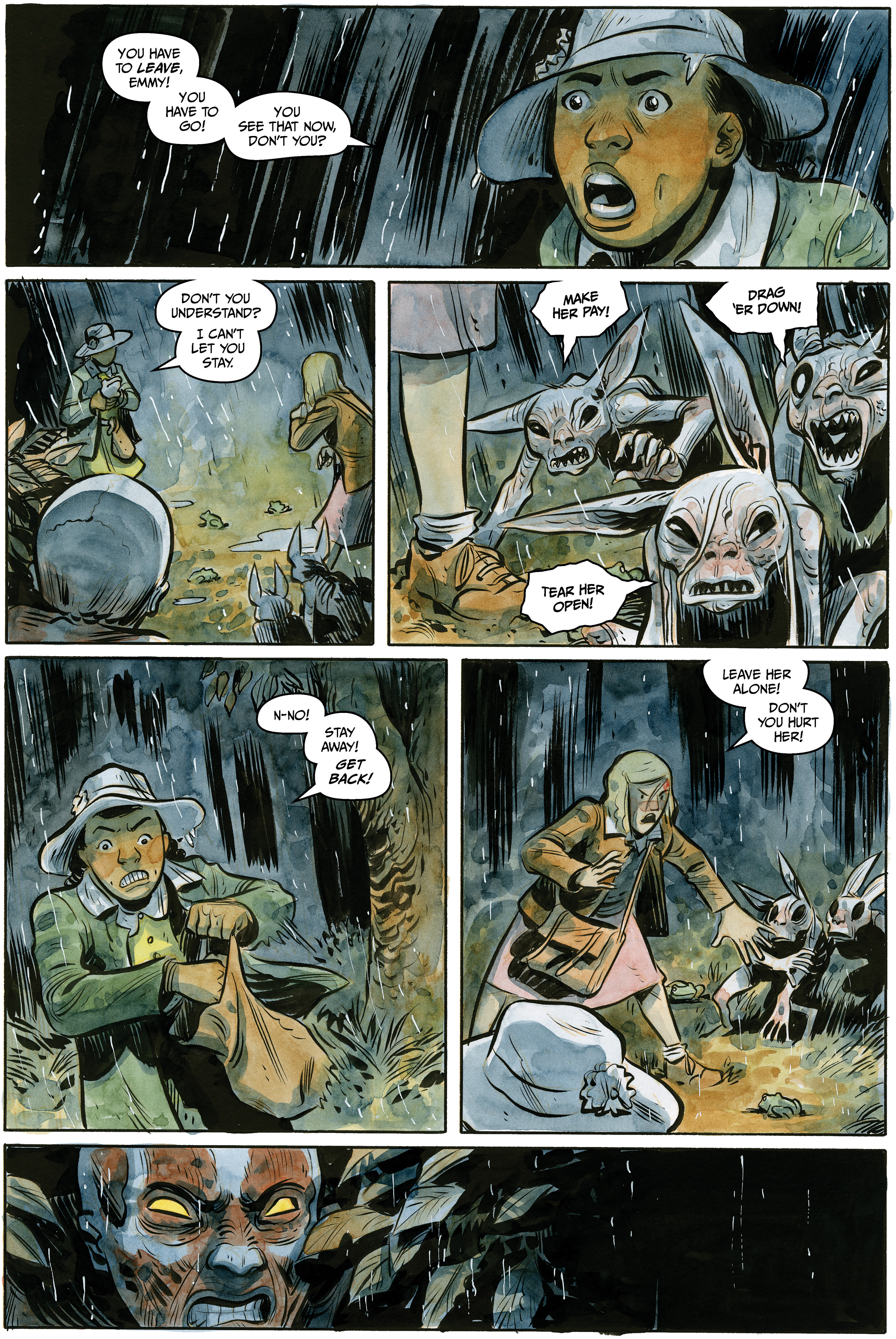

DOWN HARROW COUNTY WAY, YOUNG'UNS DUCK QUICK UNDER HEAVY QUILTS WHEN THE RAIN COMES DOWN IN SHEETS AND THE THUNDER CRASHES AND THE HOWLING WIND RATTLES THE SHUTTERS.
HARROW
COUNTY

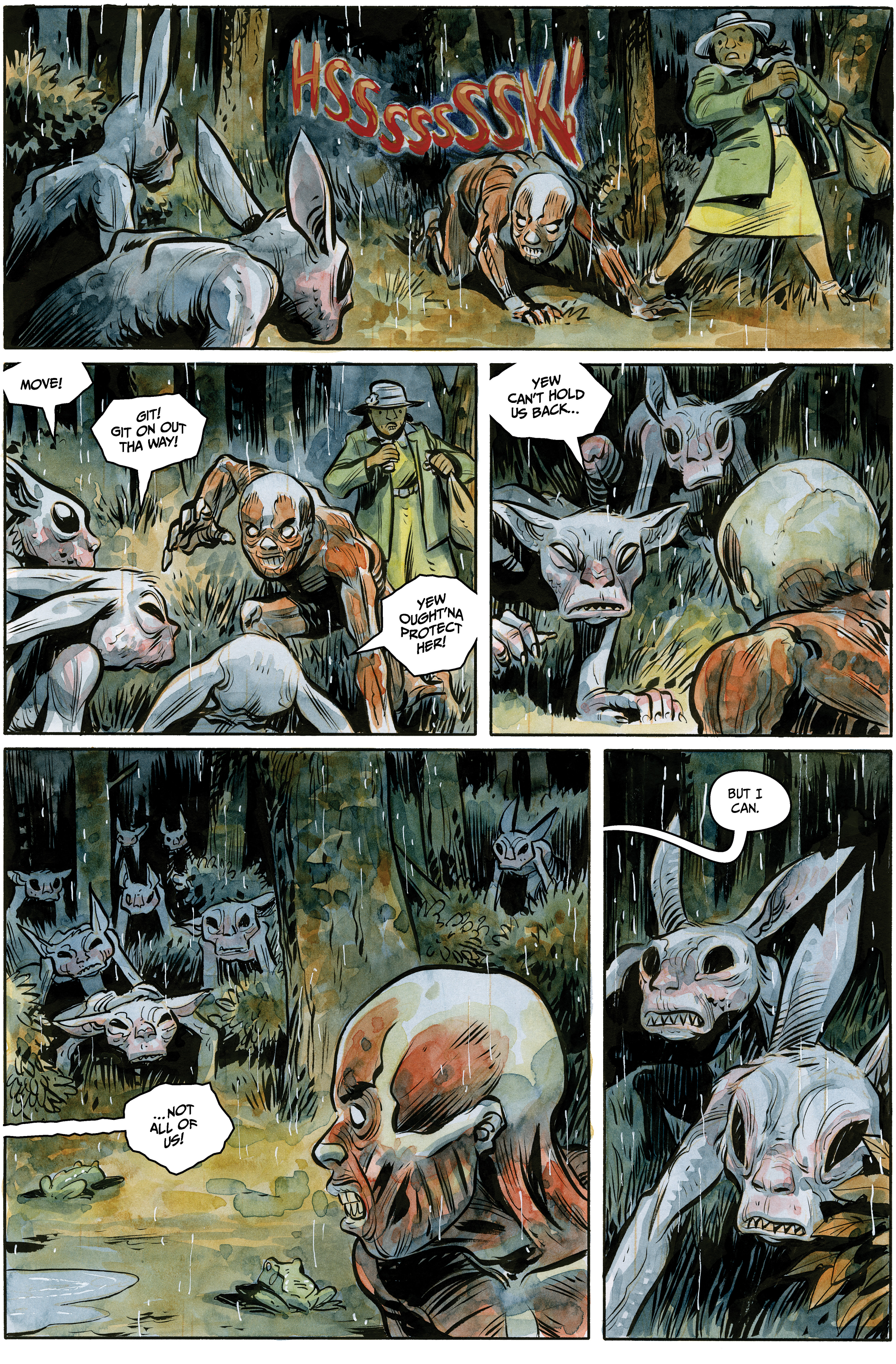

"HUSH NOW, CHILD," A MAMA MIGHT SAY.
"BE STILL. IT'S ONLY A STORM."
BUT THEY KNOW BETTER.

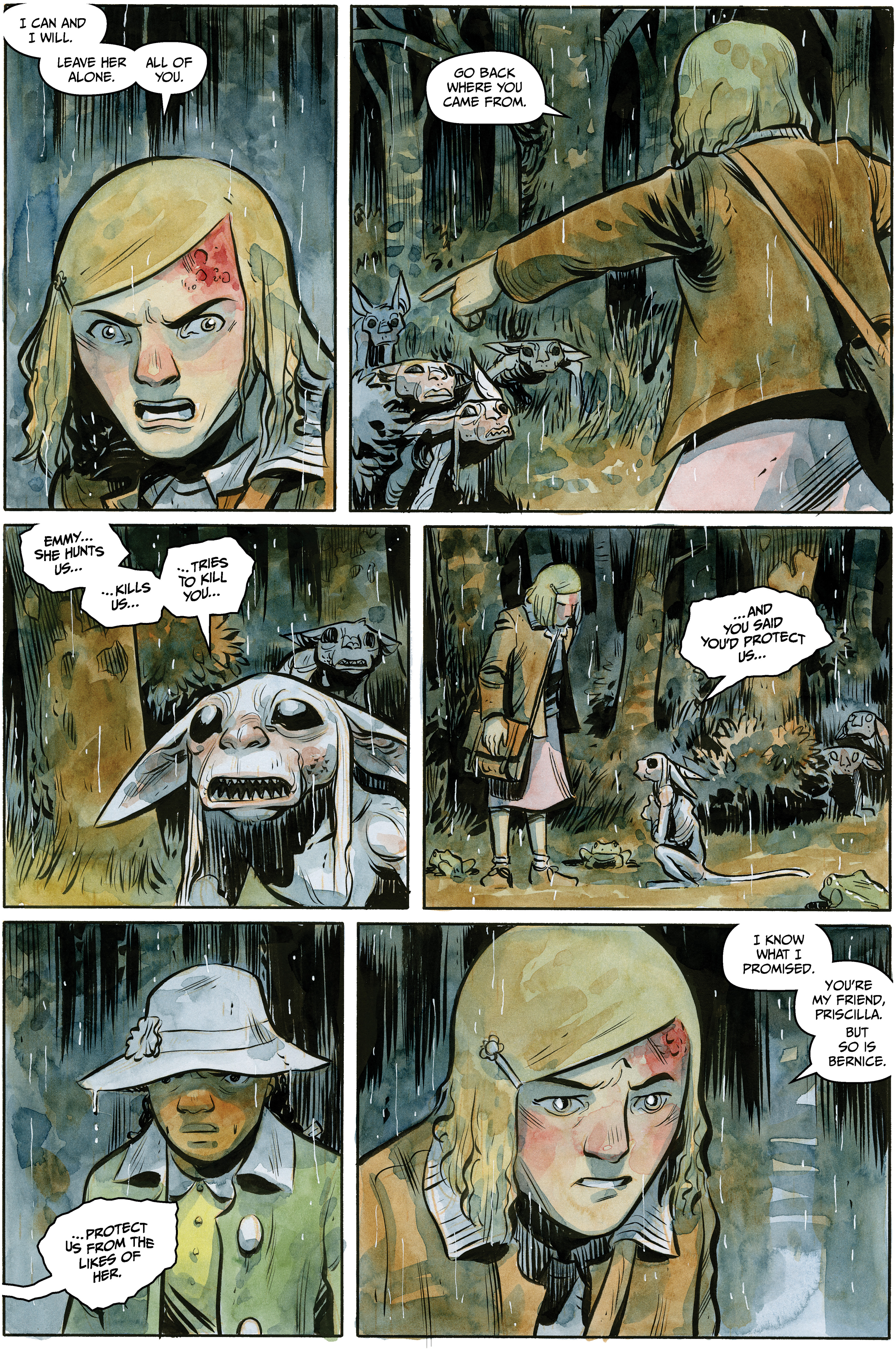

SOMETIMES, A STORM IS JUST A STORM.
BUT SOMETIMES IT IS SOMETHING MORE.
SOMETIMES, *PECULIAR THINGS* SWEEP IN WITH THE DOWNPOUR.
SOMETIMES, THE RAIN AND WIND AND LIGHTNING STIR BECAUSE OF *OTHERWORLDLY FORCES* CLASHING WITH ONE ANOTHER.
I'M SORRY, EMMY! I REALLY AM!
BUT YOU'VE GONE AND BROUGHT THIS ON YOURSELF!
SOMETIMES, NATURE'S FURY BENDS TO THE WILL OF *ANCIENT POWERS...*
BERNICE-- WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?
STOP THIS AND WE--
AHH!
IT *BURNS!*
PAP
...FORCES BEYOND THE RECKONING OF MANKIND'S UNDERSTANDING...
H-HOW...
...HOW DID YOU...
...EVEN IF THOSE POWERS ARE IN THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO ARE NOT MUCH OLDER THAN THOSE CHILDREN COWERING IN THEIR BEDS.

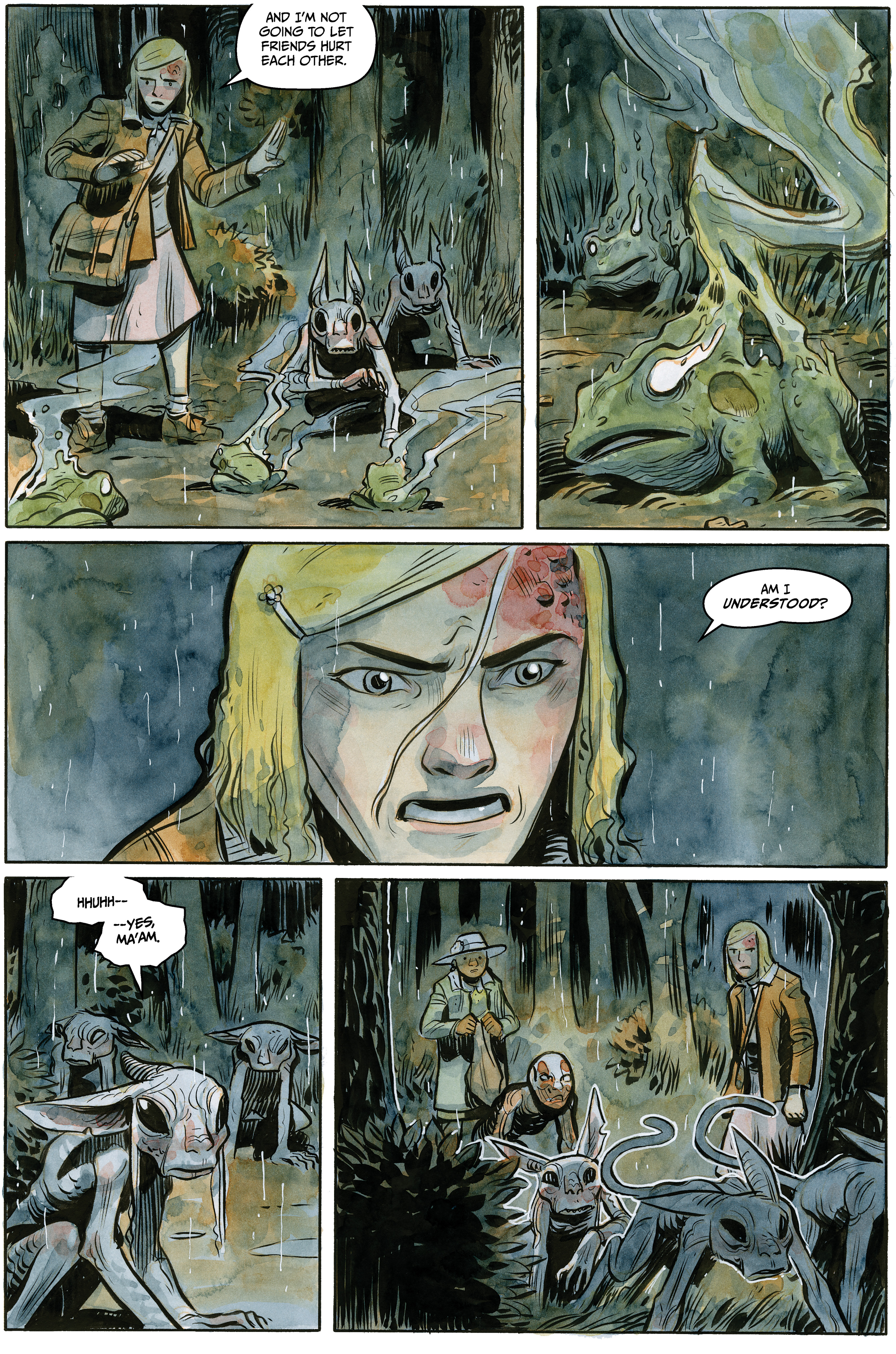

WHO TAUGHT YOU TO DO THIS?
EMMY... PLEASE...
...I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU...
...NOT LIKE THIS...
...I *PROMISE* I DON'T.
RRRRRRRRRRRRRR
NNN--
BAP!
GET 'EM!
EAT 'EM UP!
NO!
DON'T!
THEIR SKIN-- IT'S SOME KIND OF *POISON*!

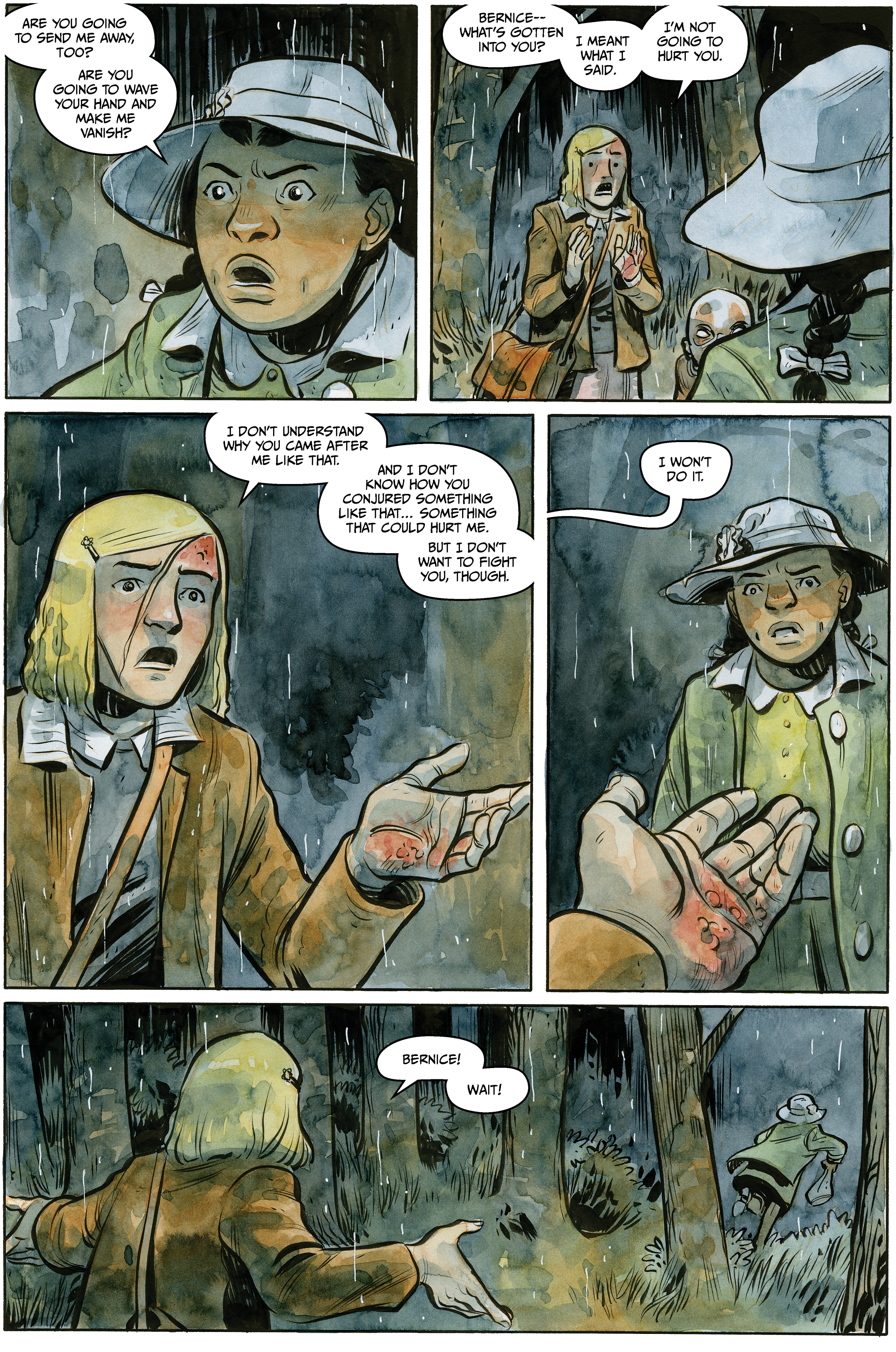

NYYYEEEAAAAAGGHHH
GGGGRRRGGG..
AND SOMETIMES LIGHTNING WAS CALLED WITCH'S FIRE...
...CALLED DOWN FROM HEAVEN AND UP FROM HELL TO FUEL DARK SORCERIES...
...BUT TONIGHT THE FIRE WAS NOT UNLEASHED AT EMMY'S WILL.
INSTEAD, THE THUNDERBOLTS STRUCK DOWN AS EMMY STRUGGLED TO REPRESS HER TRUE POWER.
SHE COULD EXTINGUISH THE LIFE OF HER FRIEND WITH A THOUGHT.
TO HER HORROR, THERE WAS PART OF HER THAT WANTED TO DO SO.
SHE KEPT THOSE DARK DESIRES TAMPED DOWN...
...AND THE WORLD AROUND HER GROANED LIKE OLD TREES BENDING IN THE GALE.

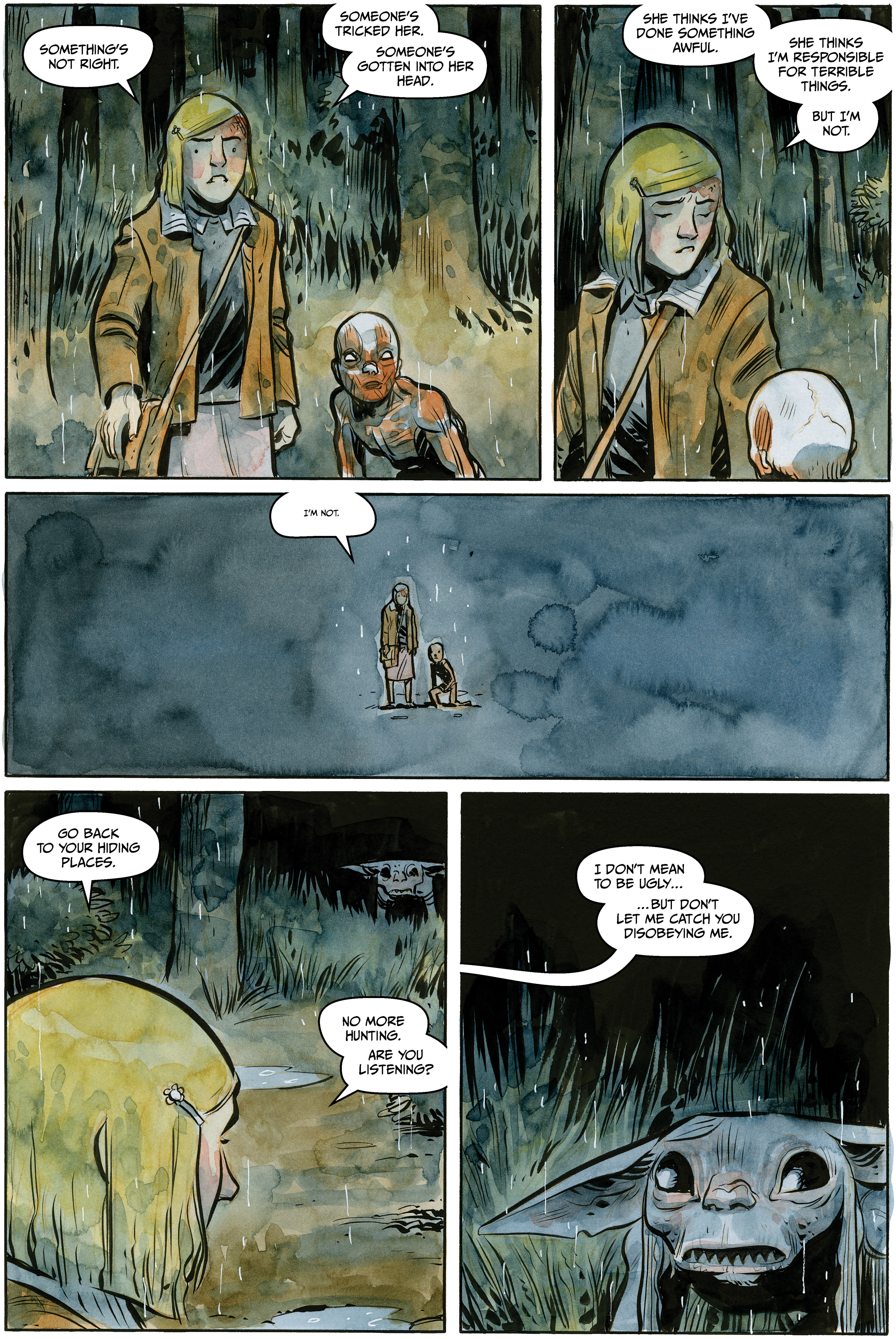

YOU HAVE TO *LEAVE*, EMMY!
YOU HAVE TO GO!
YOU SEE THAT NOW, DON'T YOU?
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? I CAN'T LET YOU STAY.
MAKE HER PAY!
DRAG 'ER DOWN!
TEAR HER OPEN!
N-NO!
STAY AWAY! *GET BACK!*
LEAVE HER ALONE!
DON'T YOU HURT HER!

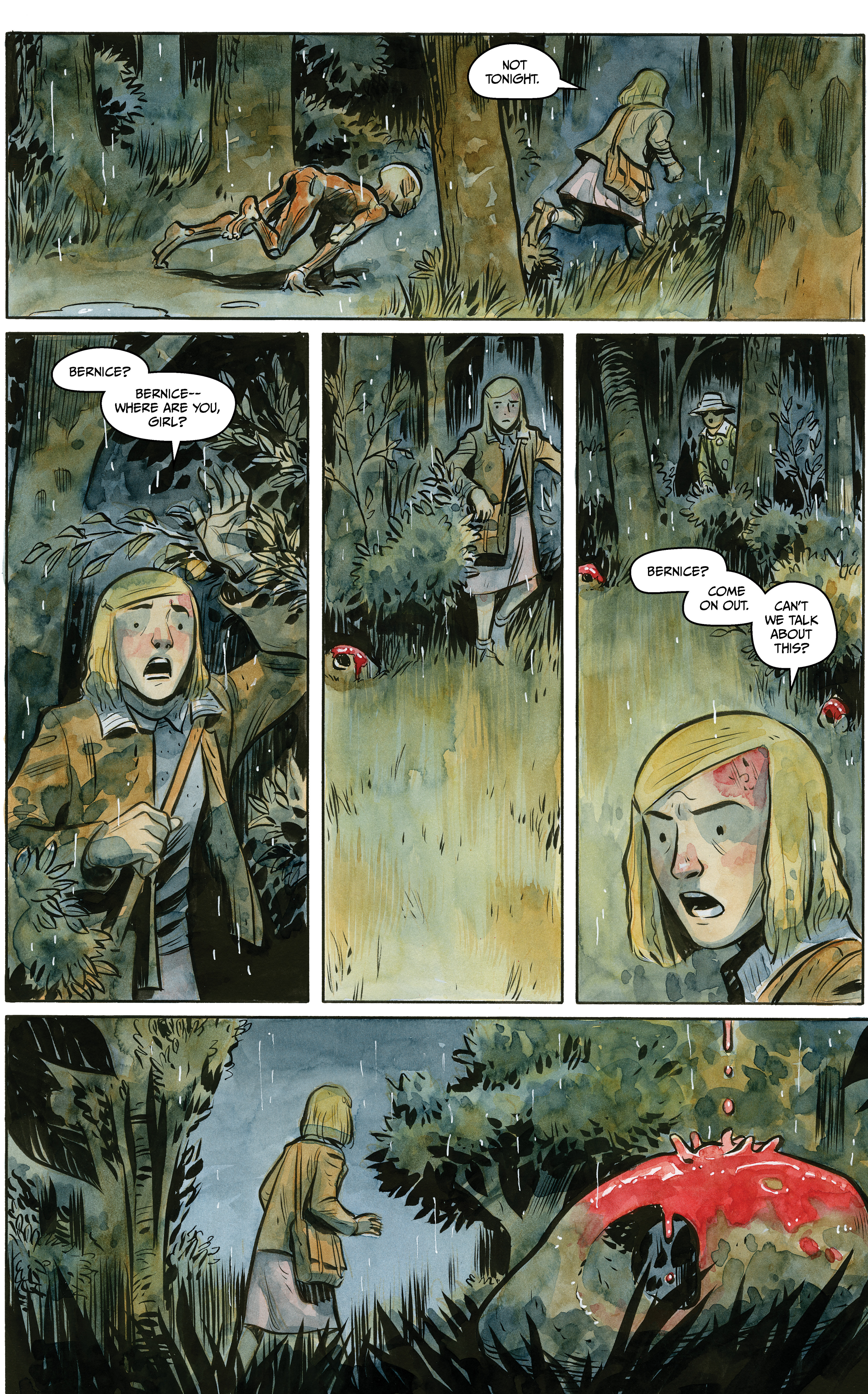

HSSSSSSSK!
MOVE!
GIT! GIT ON OUT THA WAY!
YEW OUGHT'NA PROTECT HER!
YEW CAN'T HOLD US BACK...
...NOT ALL OF US!
BUT I CAN.

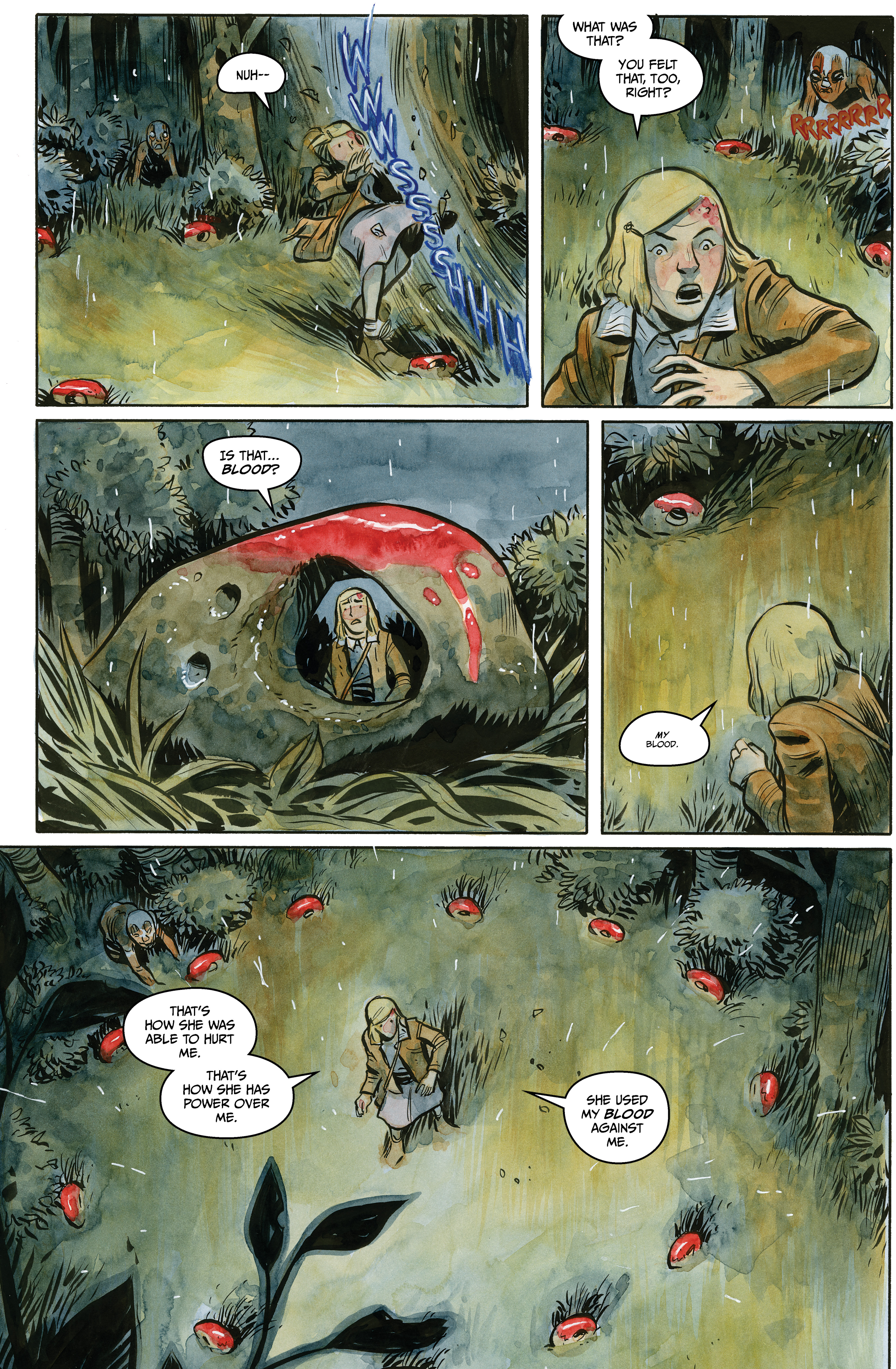

I CAN AND I WILL.
LEAVE HER ALONE.
ALL OF YOU.
GO BACK WHERE YOU CAME FROM.
EMMY... SHE HUNTS US...
...KILLS US...
...TRIES TO KILL YOU...
...AND YOU SAID YOU'D PROTECT US...
...PROTECT US FROM THE LIKES OF HER.
I KNOW WHAT I PROMISED.
YOU'RE MY FRIEND, PRISCILLA.
BUT SO IS BERNICE.

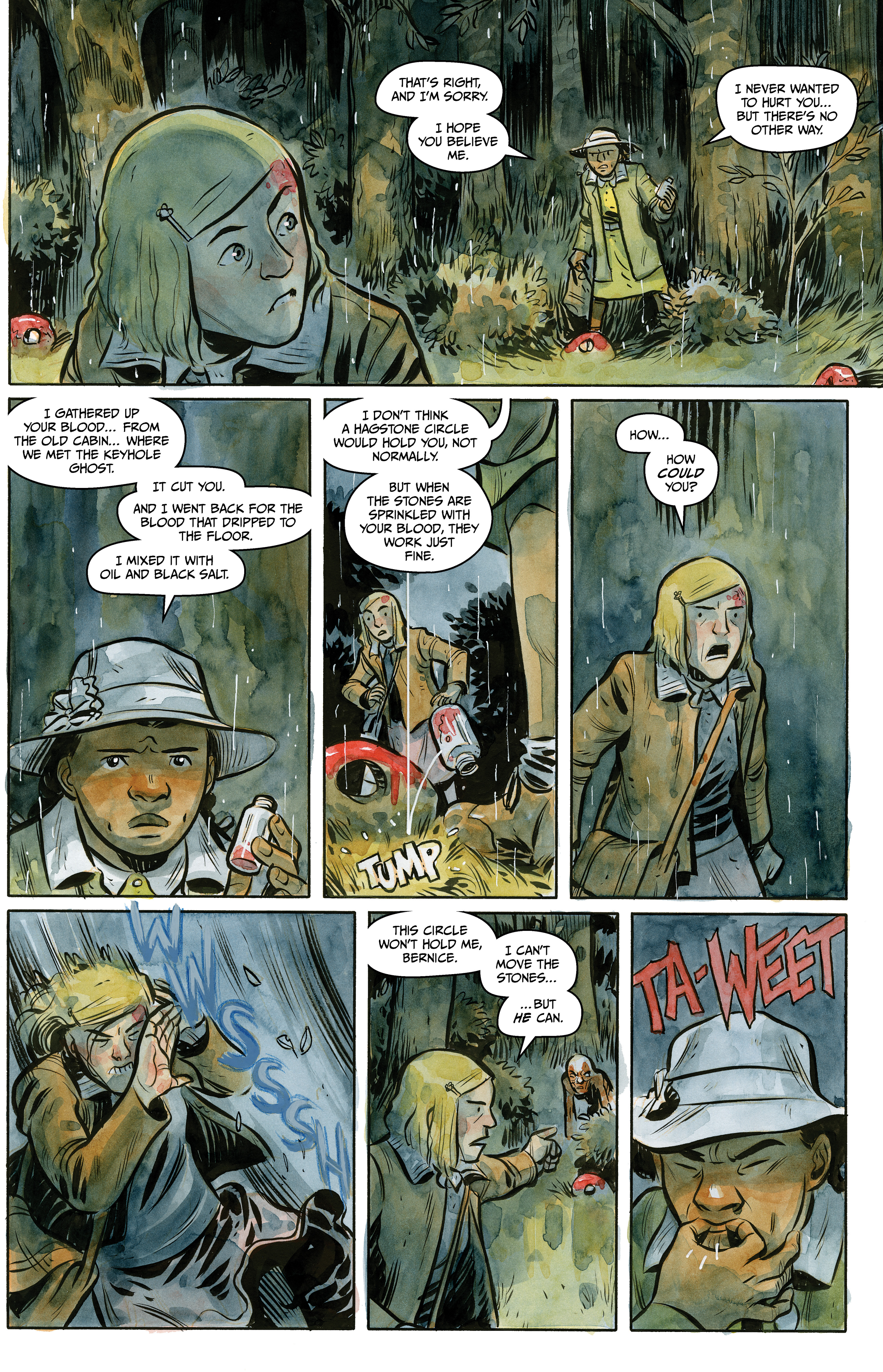

AND I'M NOT GOING TO LET FRIENDS HURT EACH OTHER.
AM I *UNDERSTOOD?*
HHUHH--
--YES, MA'AM.

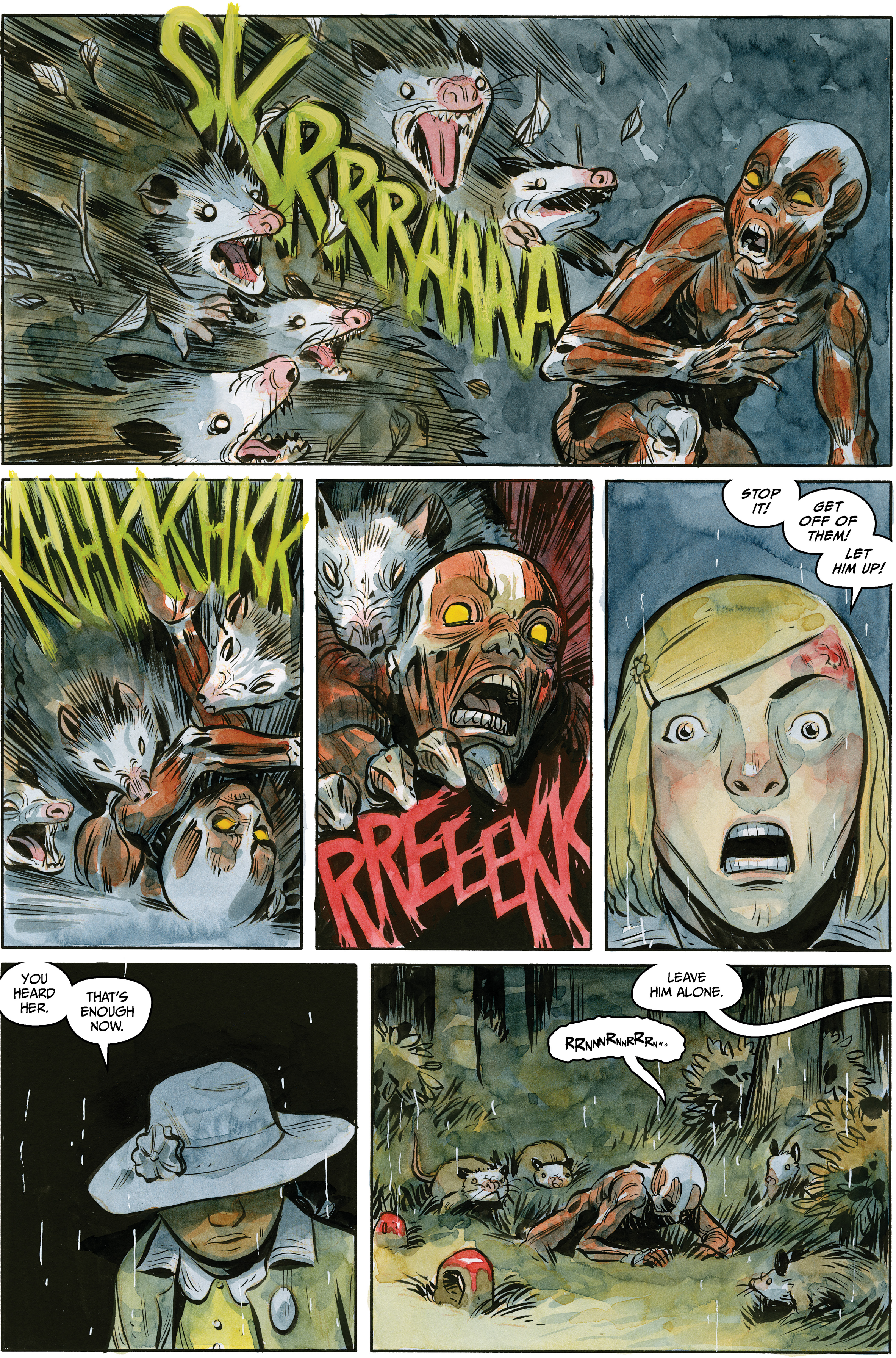

ARE YOU GOING TO SEND ME AWAY, TOO?
ARE YOU GOING TO WAVE YOUR HAND AND MAKE ME VANISH?
BERNICE-- WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?
I MEANT WHAT I SAID.
I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU CAME AFTER ME LIKE THAT.
AND I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU CONJURED SOMETHING LIKE THAT... SOMETHING THAT COULD HURT ME.
BUT I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT YOU, THOUGH.
I WON'T DO IT.
BERNICE!
WAIT!

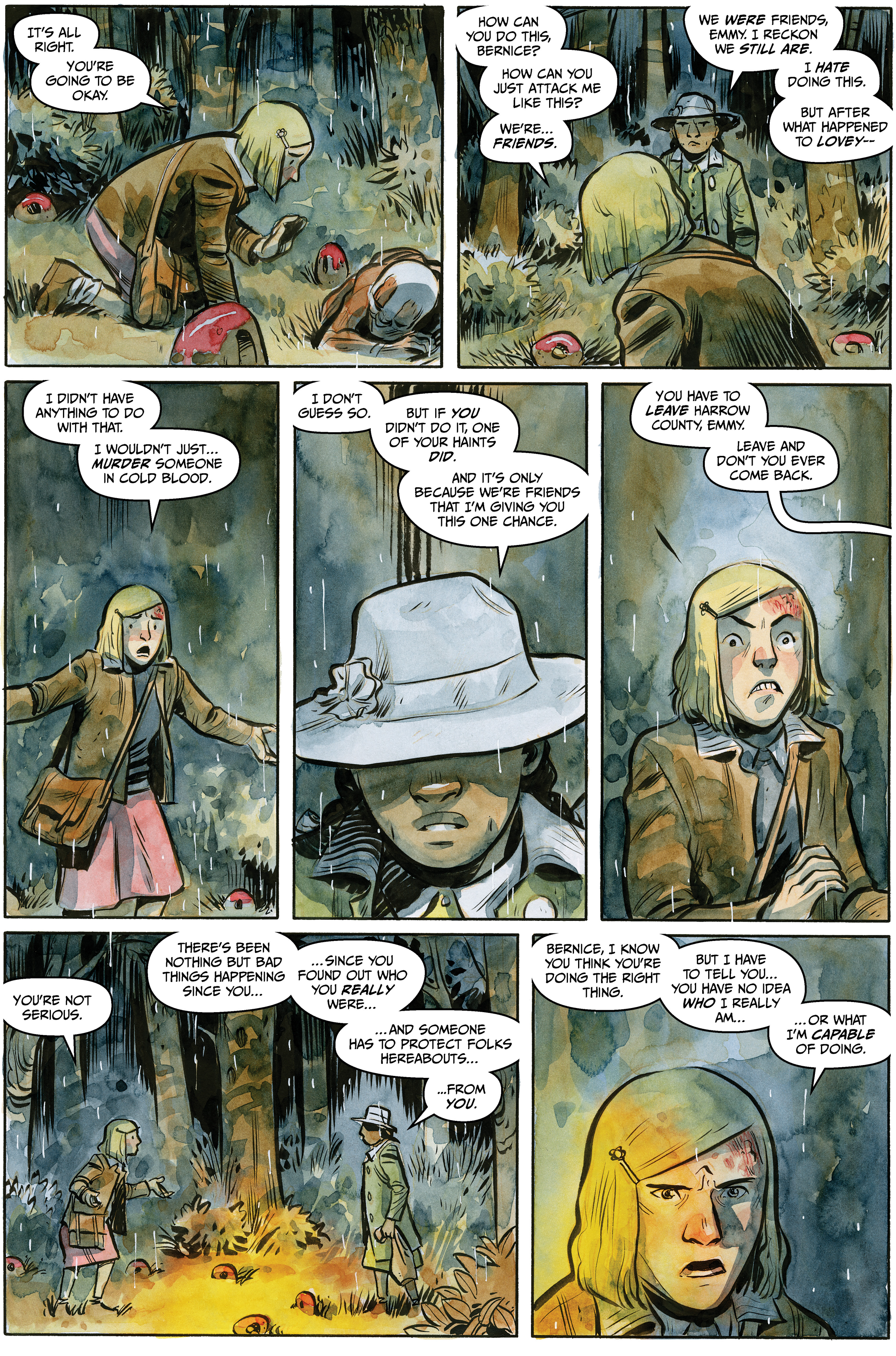

SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT.
SOMEONE'S TRICKED HER.
SOMEONE'S GOTTEN INTO HER HEAD.
SHE THINKS I'VE DONE SOMETHING AWFUL.
SHE THINKS I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR TERRIBLE THINGS.
BUT I'M NOT.
I'M NOT.
GO BACK TO YOUR HIDING PLACES.
NO MORE HUNTING.
ARE YOU LISTENING?
I DON'T MEAN TO BE UGLY...
...BUT DON'T LET ME CATCH YOU DISOBEYING ME.

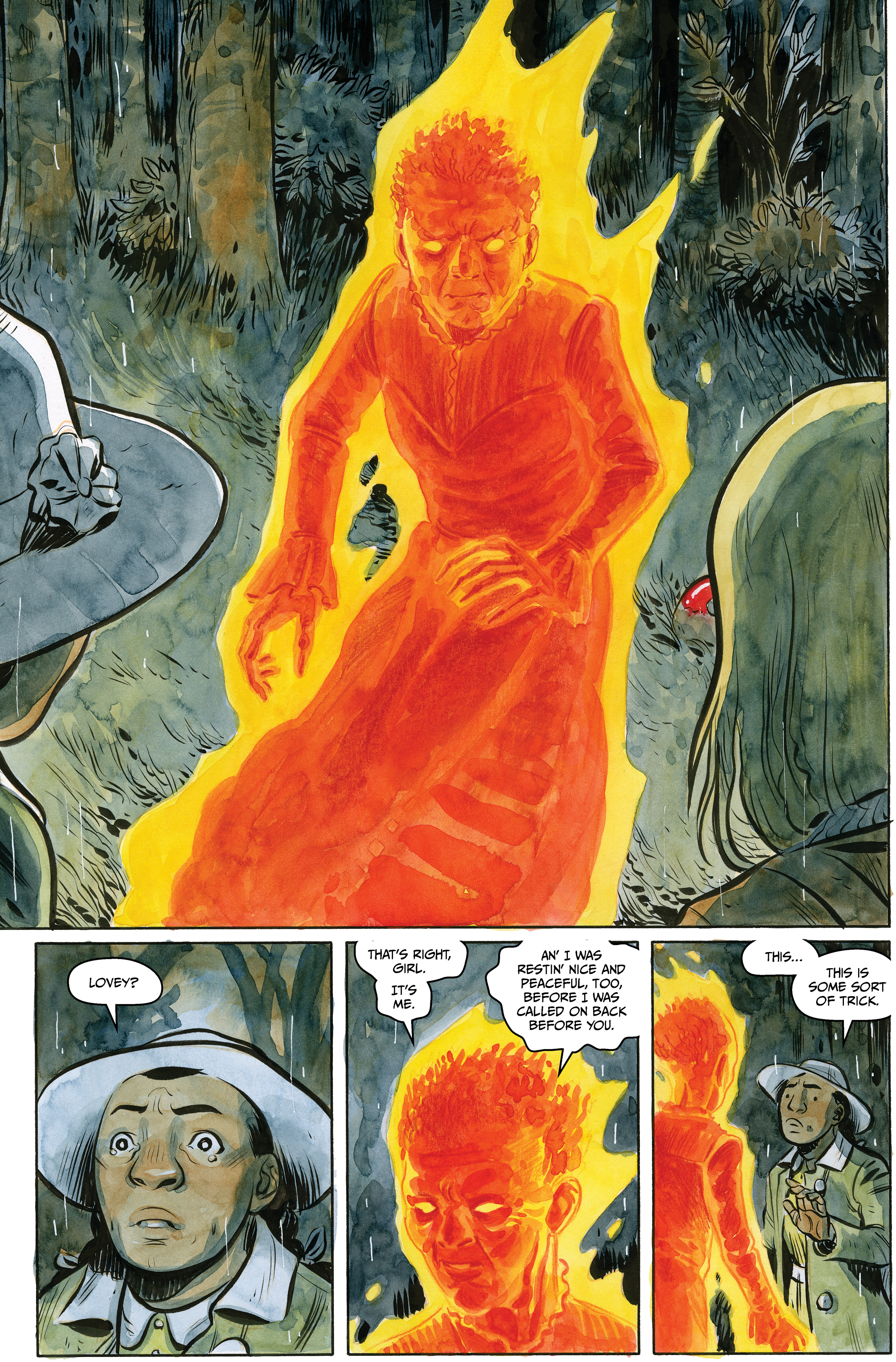

NOT TONIGHT.
BERNICE?
BERNICE-- WHERE ARE YOU, GIRL?
BERNICE?
COME ON OUT.
CAN'T WE TALK ABOUT THIS?

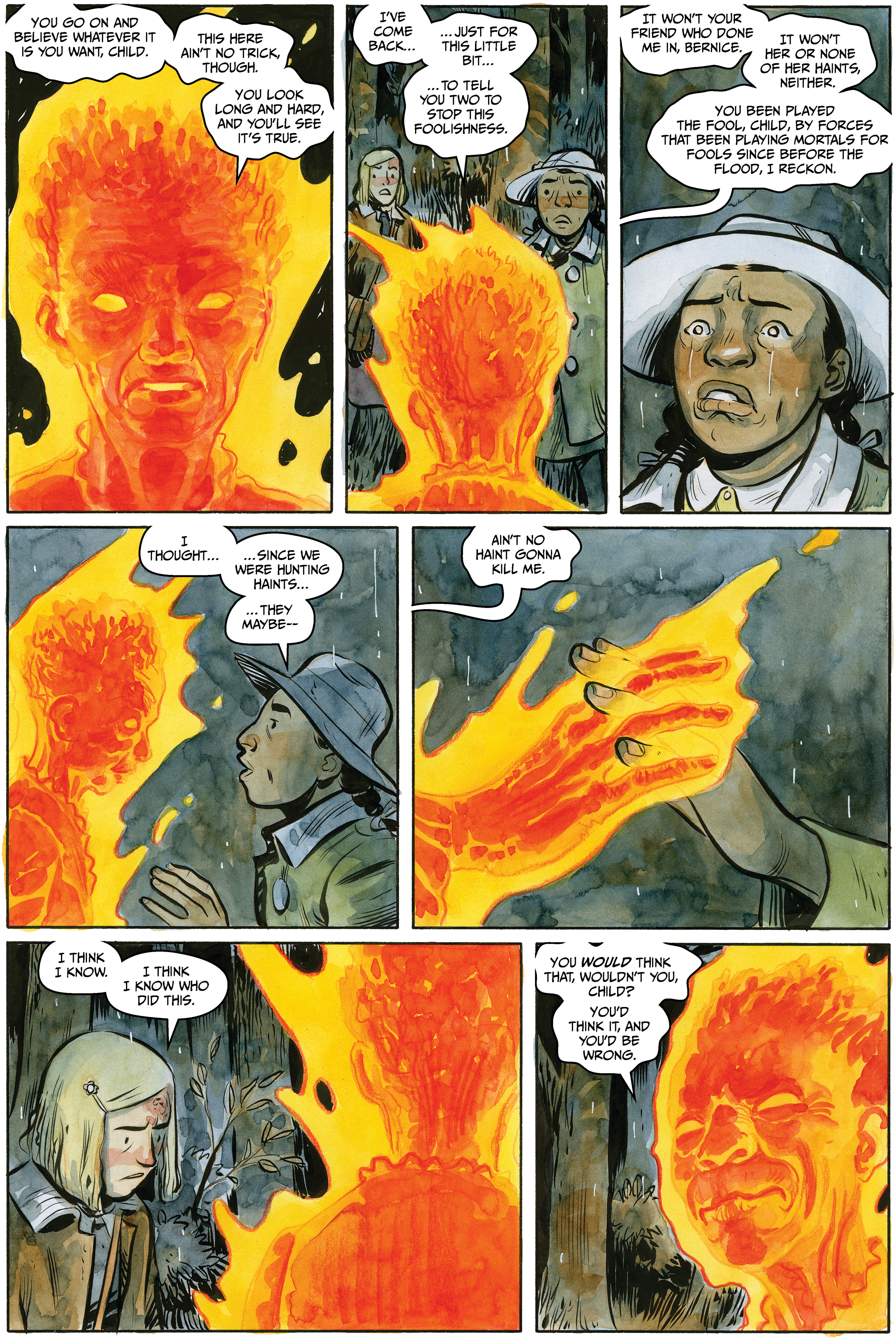

NUH--
WWWSSSCHHH
WHAT WAS THAT?
YOU FELT THAT, TOO, RIGHT?
RRRRRRRR
IS THAT... *BLOOD?*
MY BLOOD.
THAT'S HOW SHE WAS ABLE TO HURT ME.
THAT'S HOW SHE HAS POWER OVER ME.
SHE USED MY *BLOOD* AGAINST ME.

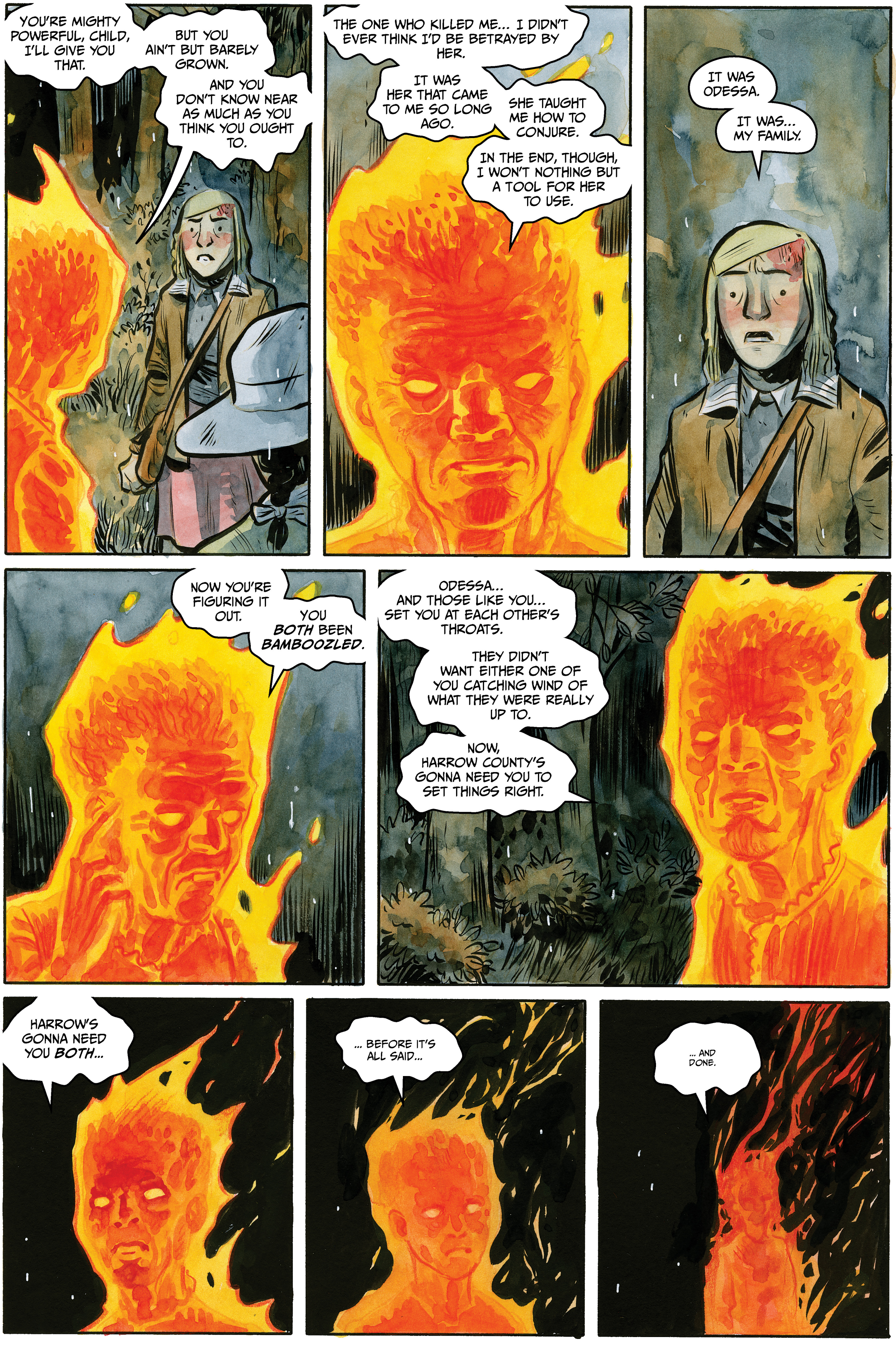

THAT'S RIGHT, AND I'M SORRY.
I HOPE YOU BELIEVE ME.
I NEVER WANTED TO HURT YOU... BUT THERE'S NO OTHER WAY.
I GATHERED UP YOUR BLOOD... FROM THE OLD CABIN... WHERE WE MET THE KEYHOLE GHOST.
IT CUT YOU.
AND I WENT BACK FOR THE BLOOD THAT DRIPPED TO THE FLOOR.
I MIXED IT WITH OIL AND BLACK SALT.
I DON'T THINK A HAGSTONE CIRCLE WOULD HOLD YOU, NOT NORMALLY.
BUT WHEN THE STONES ARE SPRINKLED WITH YOUR BLOOD, THEY WORK JUST FINE.
TUMP
HOW...
HOW *COULD* YOU?
WWSSSSH
THIS CIRCLE WON'T HOLD ME, BERNICE.
I CAN'T MOVE THE STONES...
...BUT *HE* CAN.
TA-WEET

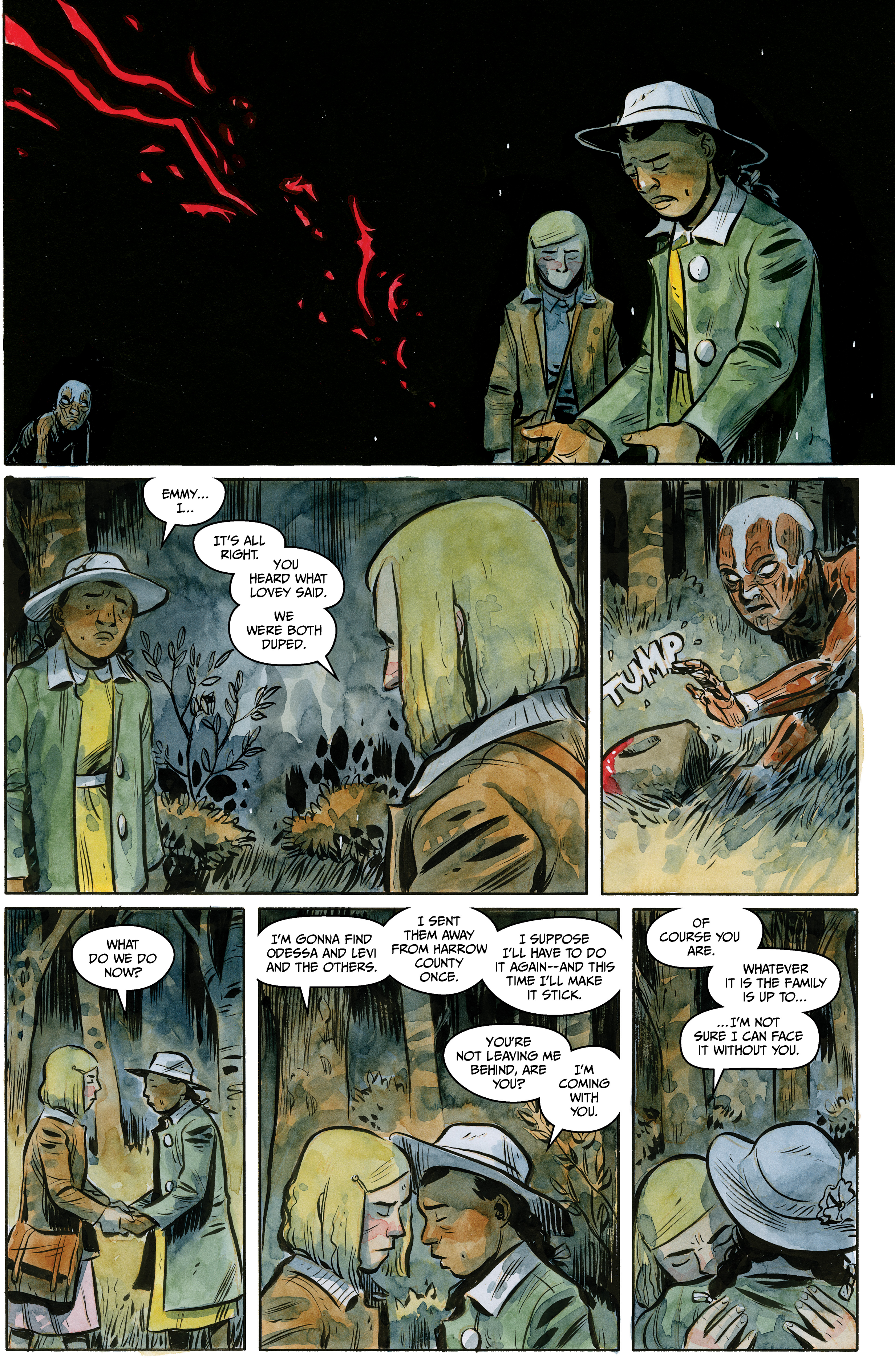

SKRRRAAAA
KHHKKHKK
RREEEEKK
STOP IT!
GET OFF OF THEM!
LET HIM UP!
YOU HEARD HER.
THAT'S ENOUGH NOW.
LEAVE HIM ALONE.
RRnnnRnnRRnnn

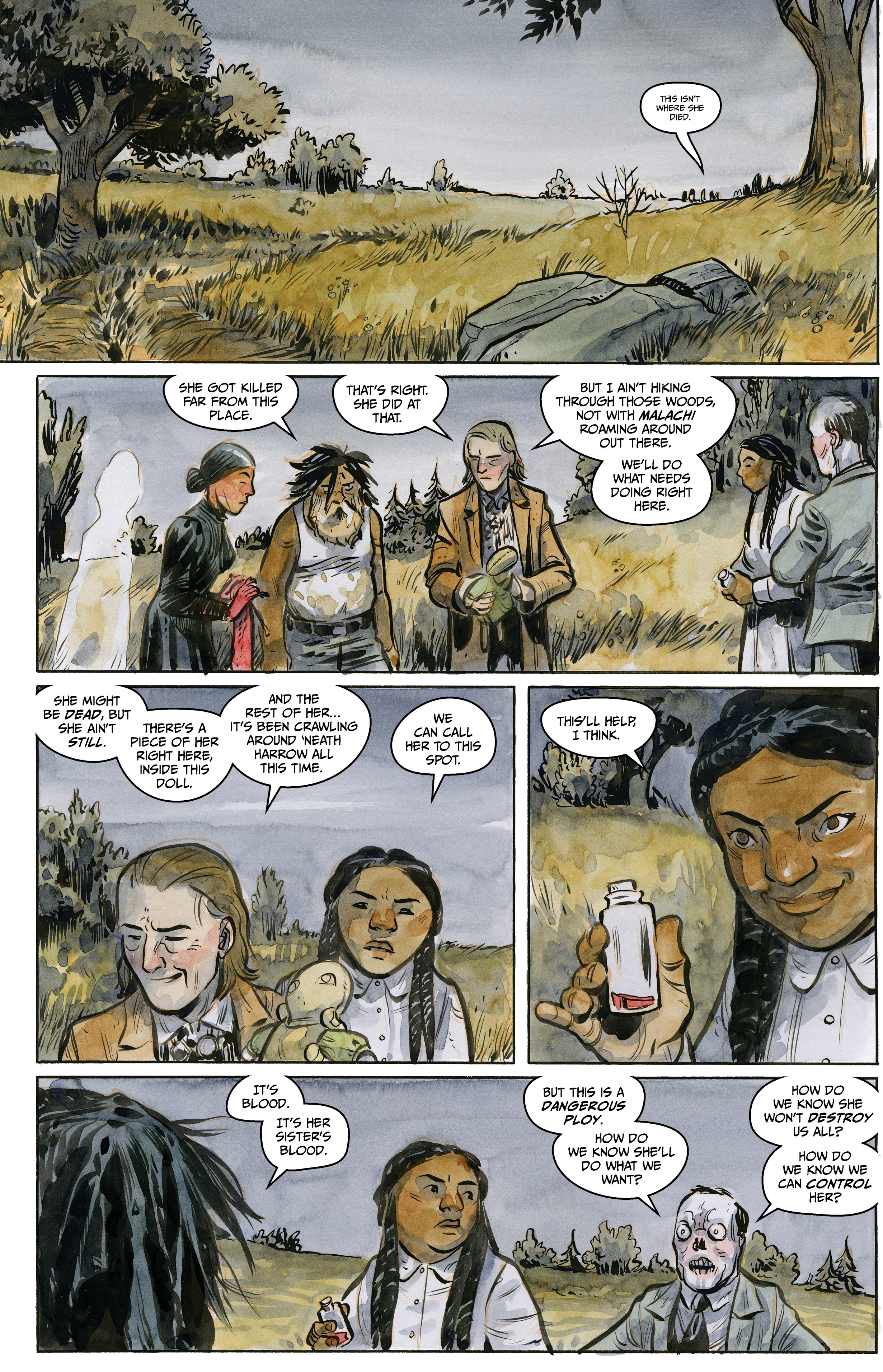

IT'S ALL RIGHT.
YOU'RE GOING TO BE OKAY.
HOW CAN YOU DO THIS, BERNICE?
HOW CAN YOU JUST ATTACK ME LIKE THIS?
WE'RE... *FRIENDS.*
WE *WERE* FRIENDS, EMMY. I RECKON WE *STILL ARE.*
I *HATE* DOING THIS.
BUT AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO *LOVEY*--
I DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THAT.
I WOULDN'T JUST... *MURDER* SOMEONE IN COLD BLOOD.
I DON'T GUESS SO.
BUT IF *YOU* DIDN'T DO IT, ONE OF YOUR HAINTS *DID.*
AND IT'S ONLY BECAUSE WE'RE FRIENDS THAT I'M GIVING YOU THIS ONE CHANCE.
YOU HAVE TO *LEAVE* HARROW COUNTY, EMMY.
LEAVE AND DON'T YOU EVER COME BACK.
YOU'RE NOT SERIOUS.
THERE'S BEEN NOTHING BUT BAD THINGS HAPPENING SINCE YOU...
...SINCE YOU FOUND OUT WHO YOU *REALLY* WERE...
...AND SOMEONE HAS TO PROTECT FOLKS HEREABOUTS...
...FROM *YOU.*
BERNICE, I KNOW YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING THE RIGHT THING.
BUT I HAVE TO TELL YOU... YOU HAVE NO IDEA *WHO* I REALLY AM...
...OR WHAT I'M *CAPABLE* OF DOING.

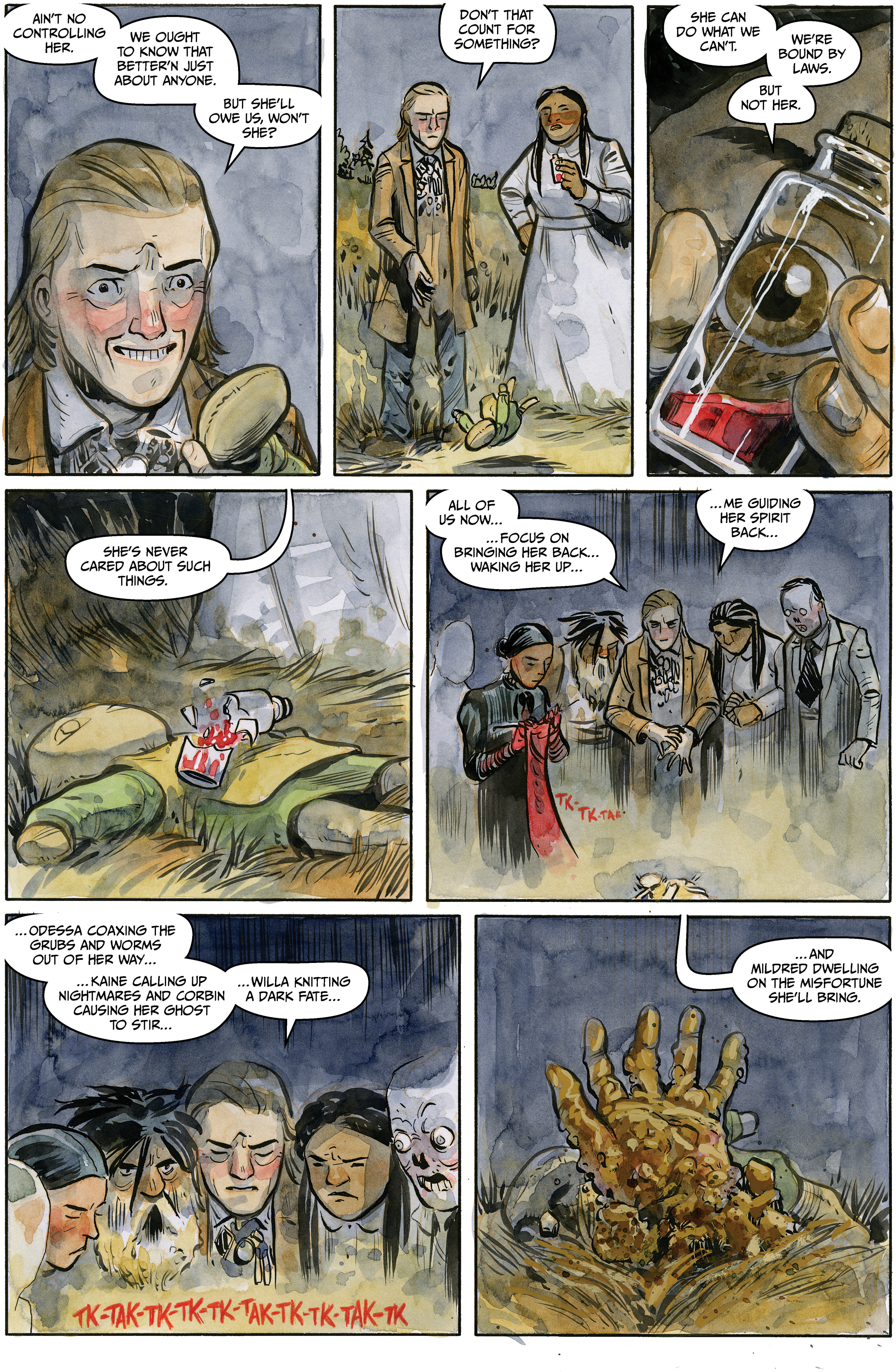

LOVEY?
THAT'S RIGHT, GIRL.
IT'S ME.
AN' I WAS RESTIN' NICE AND PEACEFUL, TOO, BEFORE I WAS CALLED ON BACK BEFORE YOU.
THIS...
THIS IS SOME SORT OF TRICK.

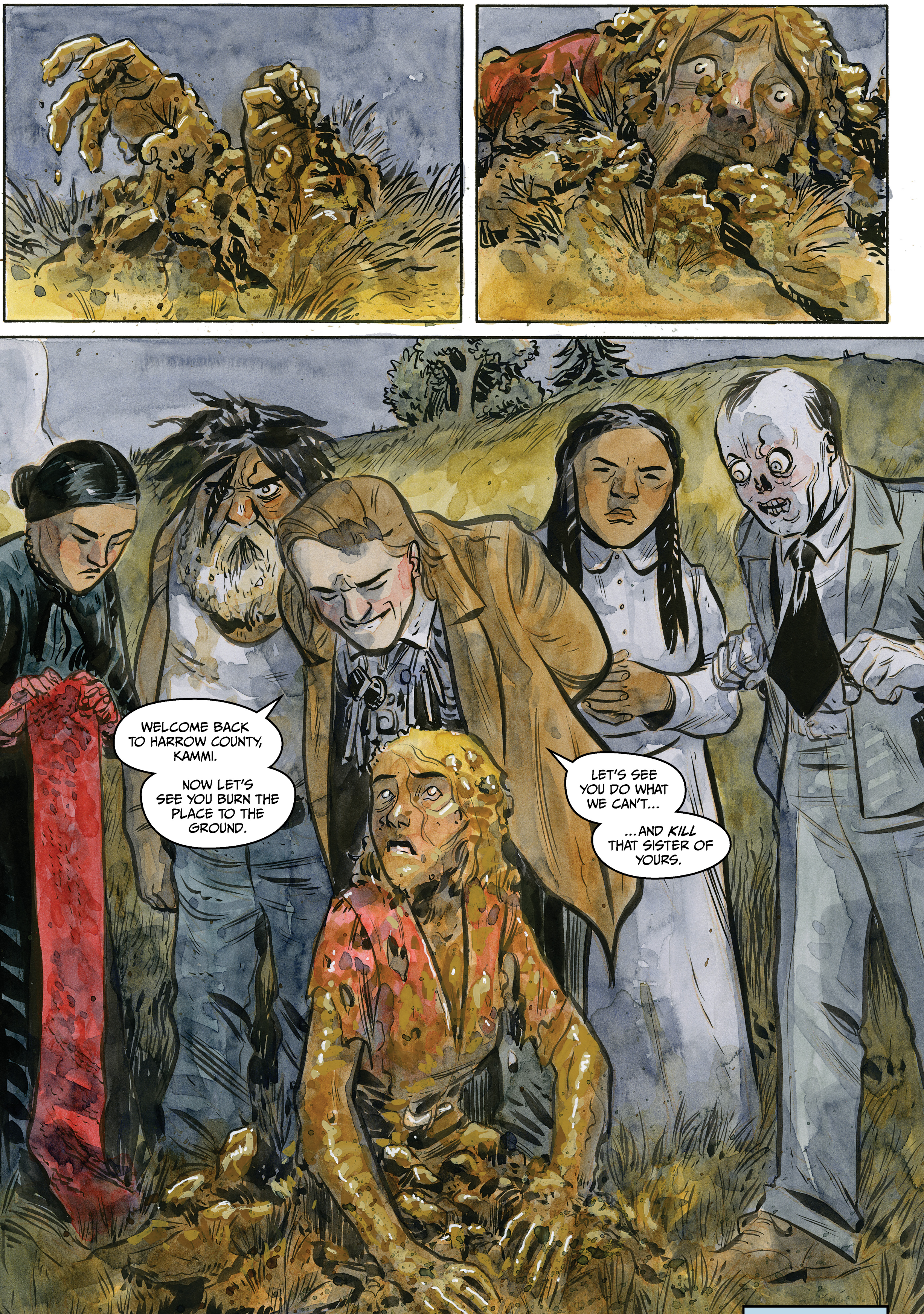

YOU GO ON AND BELIEVE WHATEVER IT IS YOU WANT, CHILD.
THIS HERE AIN'T NO TRICK, THOUGH.
YOU LOOK LONG AND HARD, AND YOU'LL SEE IT'S TRUE.
I'VE COME BACK...
...JUST FOR THIS LITTLE BIT...
...TO TELL YOU TWO TO STOP THIS FOOLISHNESS.
IT WON'T YOUR FRIEND WHO DONE ME IN, BERNICE.
IT WON'T HER OR NONE OF HER HAINTS, NEITHER.
YOU BEEN PLAYED THE FOOL, CHILD, BY FORCES THAT BEEN PLAYING MORTALS FOR FOOLS SINCE BEFORE THE FLOOD, I RECKON.
I THOUGHT...
...SINCE WE WERE HUNTING HAINTS...
...THEY MAYBE--
AIN'T NO HAINT GONNA KILL ME.
I THINK I KNOW.
I THINK I KNOW WHO DID THIS.
YOU *WOULD* THINK THAT, WOULDN'T YOU, CHILD?
YOU'D THINK IT, AND YOU'D BE WRONG.


YOU'RE MIGHTY POWERFUL, CHILD, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT.
BUT YOU AIN'T BUT BARELY GROWN.
AND YOU DON'T KNOW NEAR AS MUCH AS YOU THINK YOU OUGHT TO.
THE ONE WHO KILLED ME... I DIDN'T EVER THINK I'D BE BETRAYED BY HER.
IT WAS HER THAT CAME TO ME SO LONG AGO.
SHE TAUGHT ME HOW TO CONJURE.
IN THE END, THOUGH, I WON'T NOTHING BUT A TOOL FOR HER TO USE.
IT WAS ODESSA.
IT WAS... MY FAMILY.
NOW YOU'RE FIGURING IT OUT.
YOU *BOTH* BEEN *BAMBOOZLED.*
ODESSA... AND THOSE LIKE YOU... SET YOU AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS.
THEY DIDN'T WANT EITHER ONE OF YOU CATCHING WIND OF WHAT THEY WERE REALLY UP TO.
NOW, HARROW COUNTY'S GONNA NEED YOU TO SET THINGS RIGHT.
HARROW'S GONNA NEED YOU *BOTH*...
... BEFORE IT'S ALL SAID...
... AND DONE.


EMMY... I...
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
YOU HEARD WHAT LOVEY SAID.
WE WERE BOTH DUPED.
TUMP
WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
I'M GONNA FIND ODESSA AND LEVI AND THE OTHERS.
I SENT THEM AWAY FROM HARROW COUNTY ONCE.
I SUPPOSE I'LL HAVE TO DO IT AGAIN--AND THIS TIME I'LL MAKE IT STICK.
YOU'RE NOT LEAVING ME BEHIND, ARE YOU?
I'M COMING WITH YOU.
OF COURSE YOU ARE.
WHATEVER IT IS THE FAMILY IS UP TO...
...I'M NOT SURE I CAN FACE IT WITHOUT YOU.

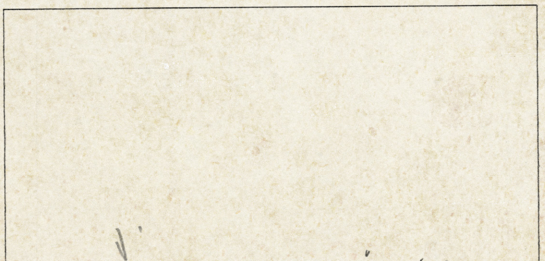

THIS ISN'T WHERE SHE DIED.
SHE GOT KILLED FAR FROM THIS PLACE.
THAT'S RIGHT. SHE DID AT THAT.
BUT I AIN'T HIKING THROUGH THOSE WOODS, NOT WITH *MALACHI* ROAMING AROUND OUT THERE.
WE'LL DO WHAT NEEDS DOING RIGHT HERE.
SHE MIGHT BE *DEAD*, BUT SHE AIN'T *STILL*.
THERE'S A PIECE OF HER RIGHT HERE, INSIDE THIS DOLL.
AND THE REST OF HER... IT'S BEEN CRAWLING AROUND 'NEATH HARROW ALL THIS TIME.
WE CAN CALL HER TO THIS SPOT.
THIS'LL HELP, I THINK.
IT'S BLOOD.
IT'S HER SISTER'S BLOOD.
BUT THIS IS A *DANGEROUS PLOY*.
HOW DO WE KNOW SHE'LL DO WHAT WE WANT?
HOW DO WE KNOW SHE WON'T *DESTROY* US ALL?
HOW DO WE KNOW WE CAN *CONTROL* HER?


AIN'T NO CONTROLLING HER.
WE OUGHT TO KNOW THAT BETTER'N JUST ABOUT ANYONE.
BUT SHE'LL OWE US, WON'T SHE?
DON'T THAT COUNT FOR SOMETHING?
SHE CAN DO WHAT WE CAN'T.
WE'RE BOUND BY LAWS.
BUT NOT HER.
SHE'S NEVER CARED ABOUT SUCH THINGS.
ALL OF US NOW...
...FOCUS ON BRINGING HER BACK... WAKING HER UP...
...ME GUIDING HER SPIRIT BACK...
TK-TK-TAK
...ODESSA COAXING THE GRUBS AND WORMS OUT OF HER WAY...
...KAINE CALLING UP NIGHTMARES AND CORBIN CAUSING HER GHOST TO STIR...
...WILLA KNITTING A DARK FATE...
TK-TAK-TK-TK-TK-TAK-TK-TK-TAK-TK
...AND MILDRED DWELLING ON THE MISFORTUNE SHE'LL BRING.


WELCOME BACK TO HARROW COUNTY, KAMMI.
NOW LET'S SEE YOU BURN THE PLACE TO THE GROUND.
LET'S SEE YOU DO WHAT WE CAN'T...
...AND *KILL* THAT SISTER OF YOURS.
TO BE CONTINUED...

HARROW COUNTY™ SKETCHBOOK

NOTES BY
TYLER CROOK



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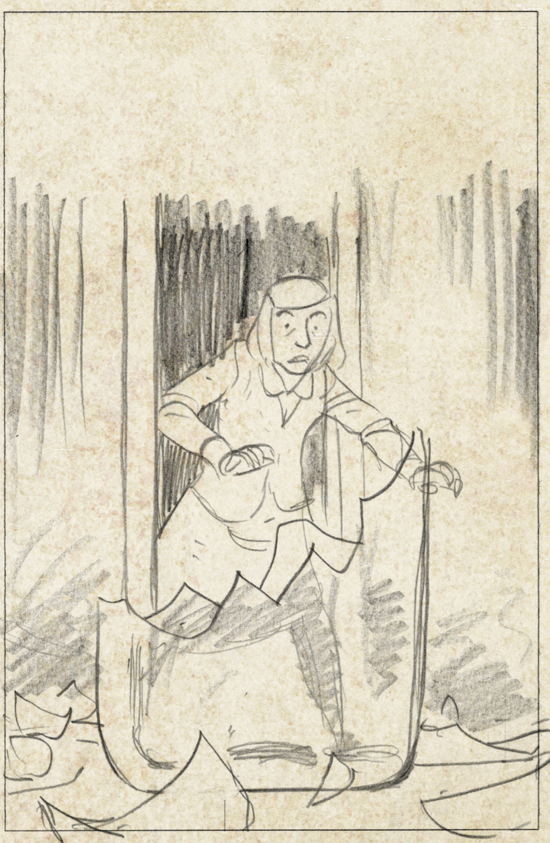
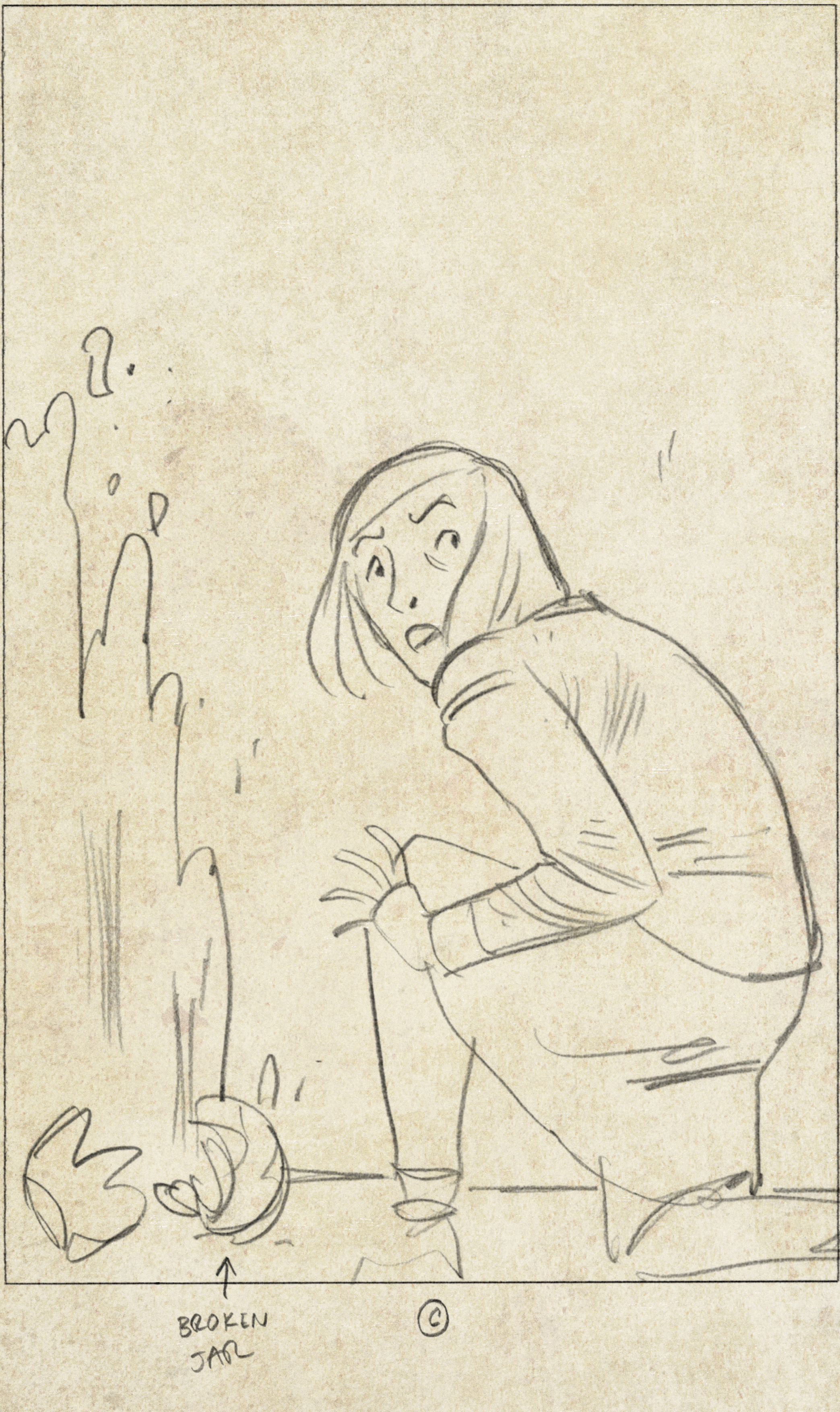


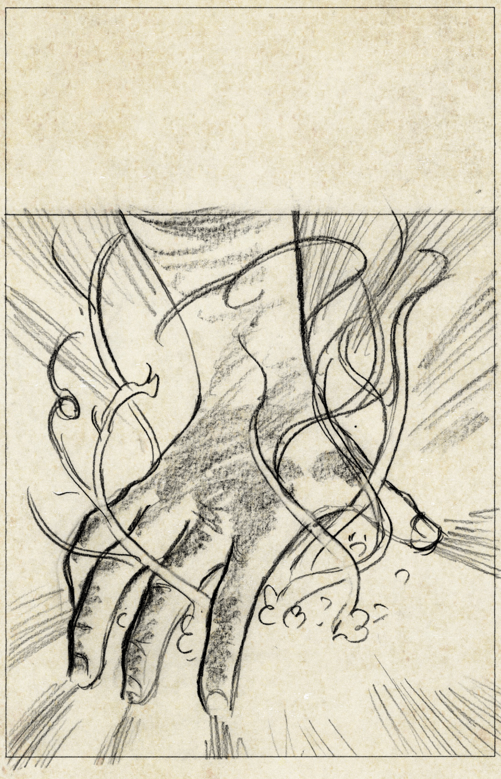
B

TC: These are some of the rejected sketches for the *Harrow County* #21 cover. Usually I try to find a couple of different moments to play around with, but I really liked the idea of Emmy interacting with a broken bottle. I liked how it set up the question of Emmy's relationship with Lovey. So I ended up just doing three different ideas of how to present the same event.



BROKEN JAR

Ⓒ



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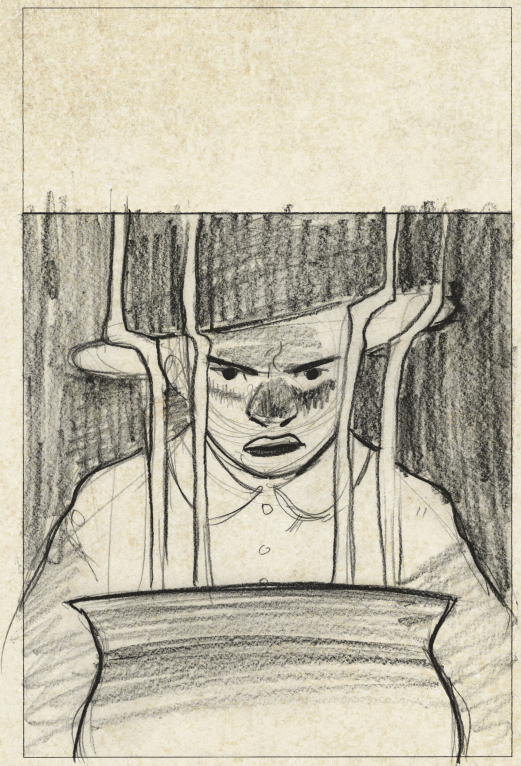

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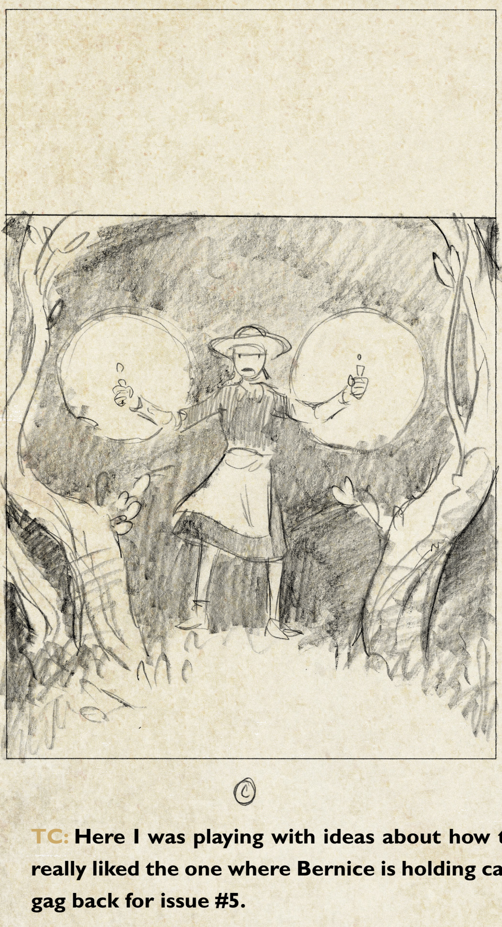

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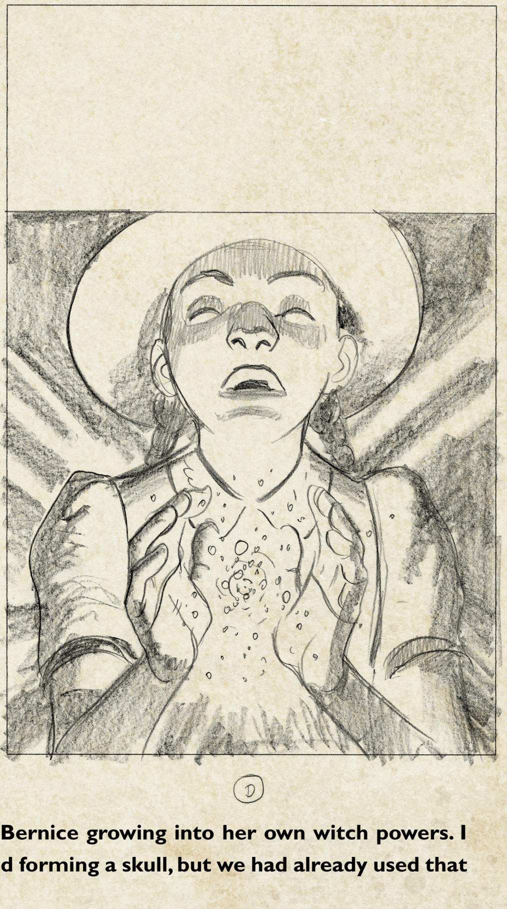

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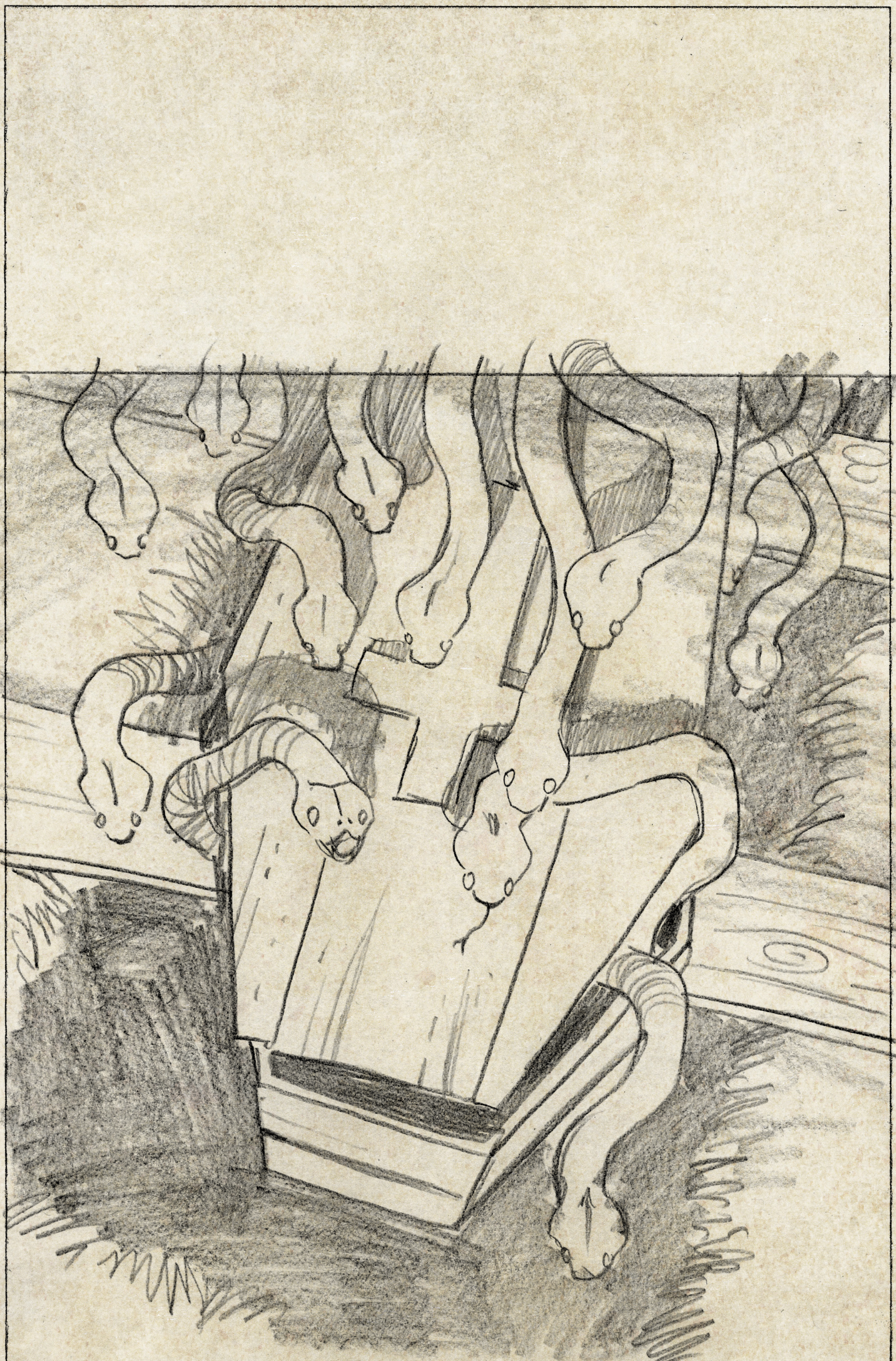
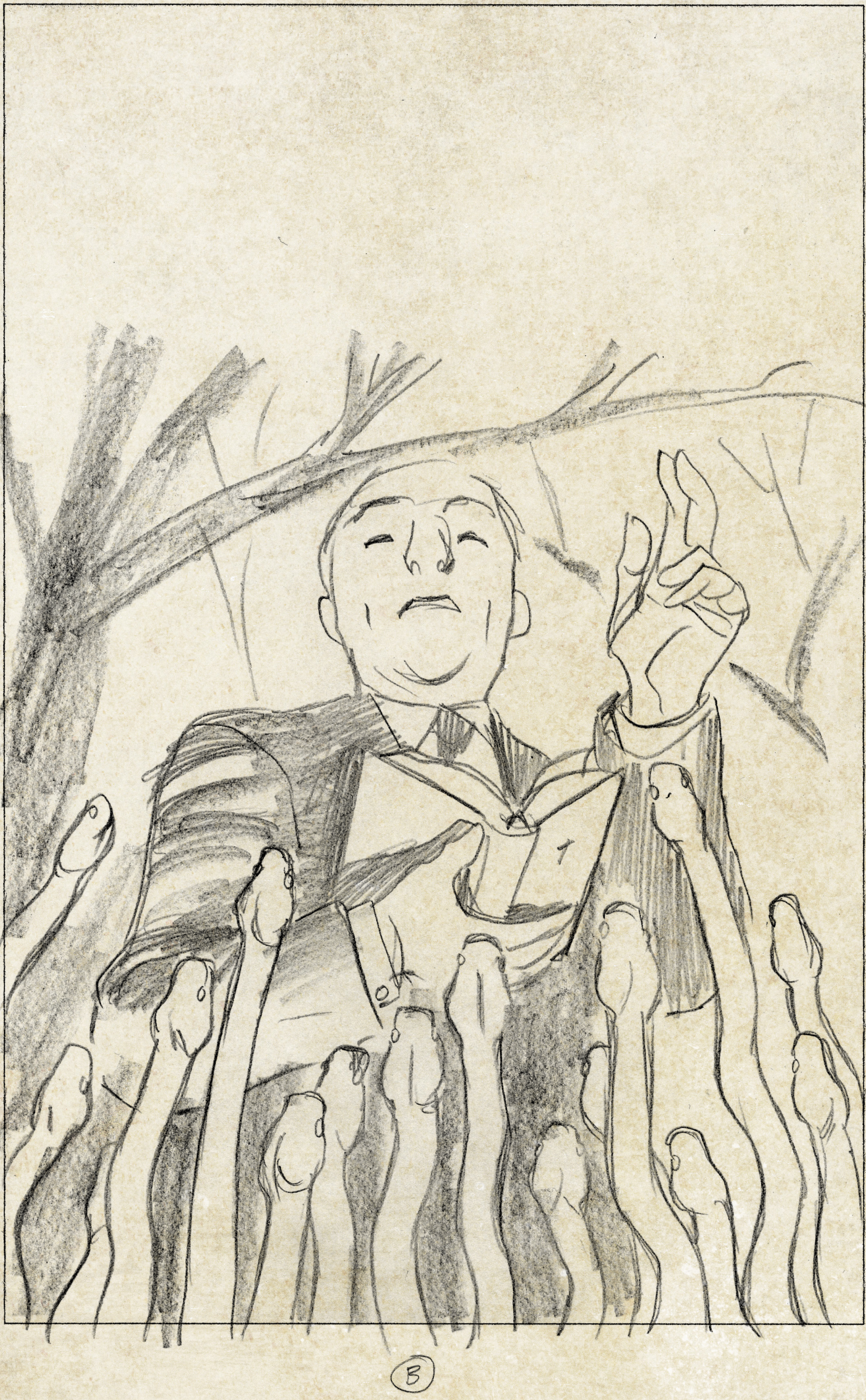
TC: Here I was playing with ideas about how to show Bernice growing into her own witch powers. I really liked the one where Bernice is holding candles and forming a skull, but we had already used that gag back for issue #5.



TC: **This ended up being one of my favorite covers. I think the idea and the composition from the sketch made it all the way to the final art.**



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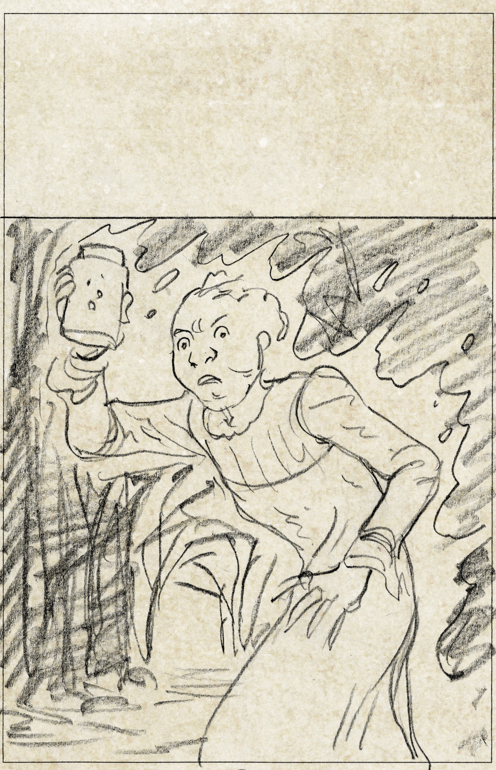
TC: We rejected this cover idea because it didn't make any sense for the preacher to be preaching to the snakes.



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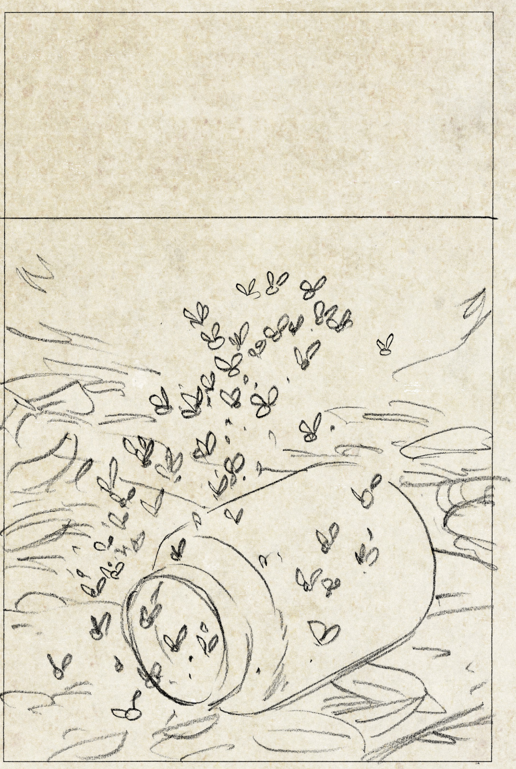

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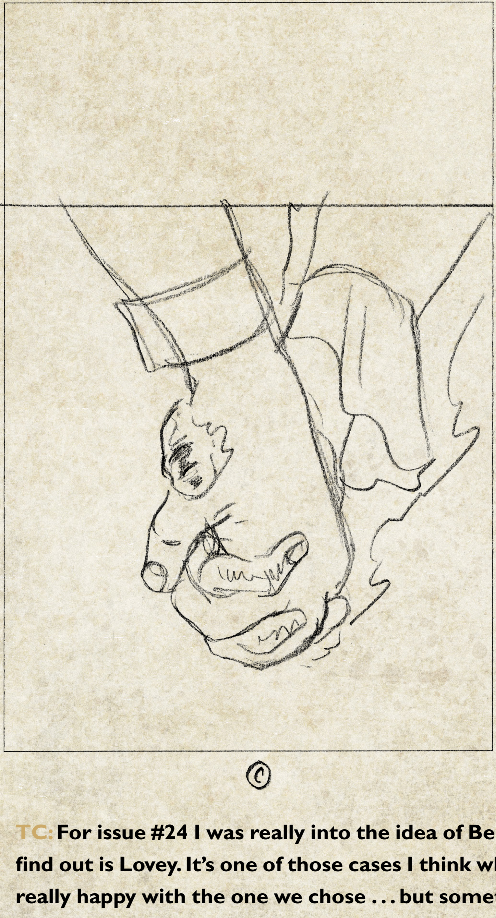

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TC: **For issue #24 I was really into the idea of Bernice holding hands with a burning ghost that we later find out is Lovey. It's one of those cases I think where the idea isn't very well served by the sketch. I was really happy with the one we chose . . . but sometimes it's hard not to dream about the road not taken.**

HARROW
BESTIARY
COUNTY™

THE SKINLESS BOY

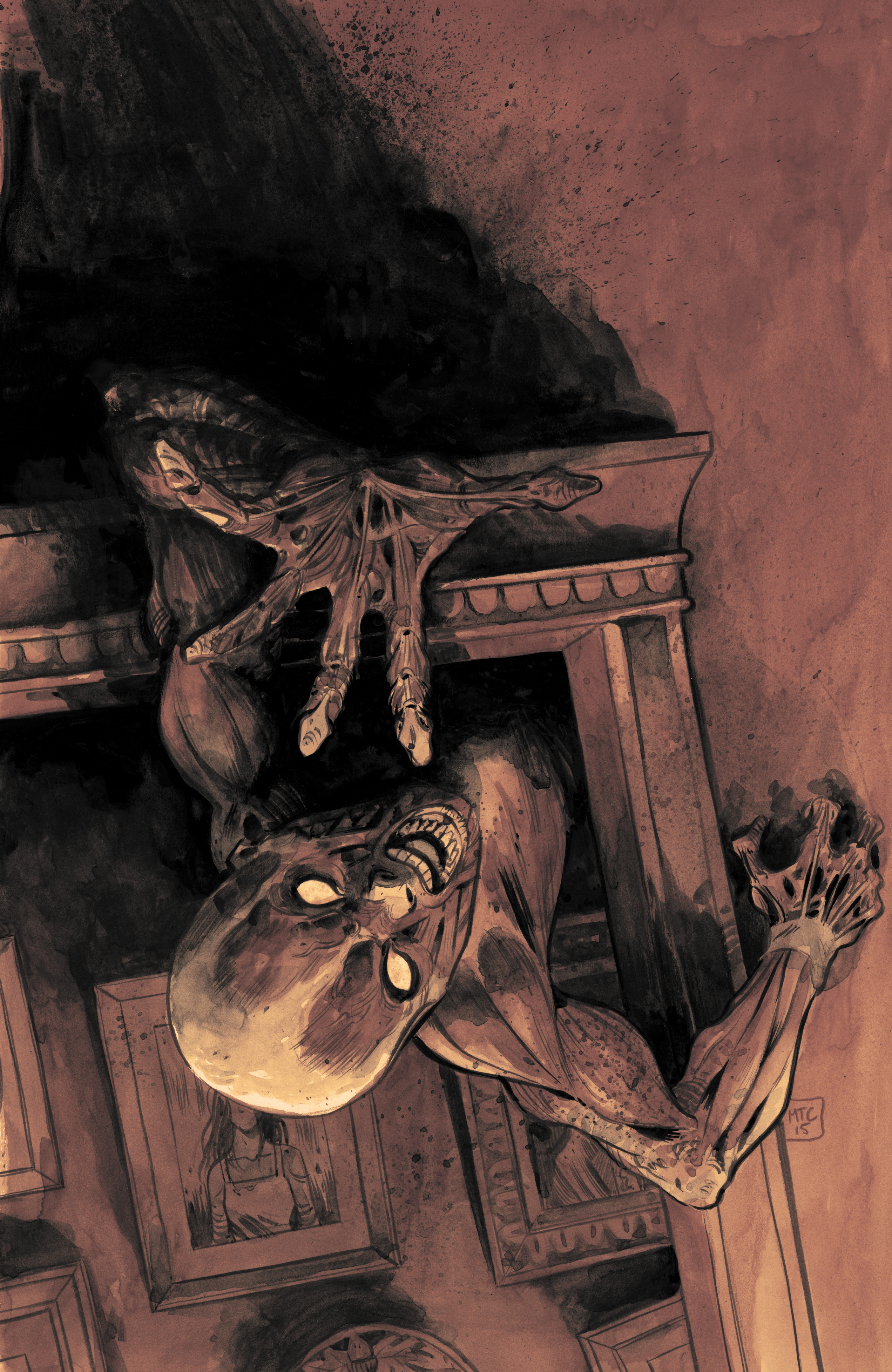
THE TATTERED SKIN

WOODLAND GHOSTS

GOBLINS

THE SKINLESS BOY

Some say this creature had a name once, just like he had a skin, but both have been lost to him. Legend holds that he wandered too far from home one day, getting lost in the deepest part of the woods. Come nightfall, a pack of hungry wild dogs caught his scent and set about chasing him. Unable to shake the hounds, the boy plunged into a tangle of briar bushes. He pushed through as the thorns tore at his flesh, sweat running down into hundreds of stinging cuts and scrapes. By the time he reached the other side of the tangle, his skin hung in ribbons from his muscle and bone. And even then he wasn't safe. The dogs had circled around the briars, and they were waiting to fall upon him when he dragged himself out of the brush.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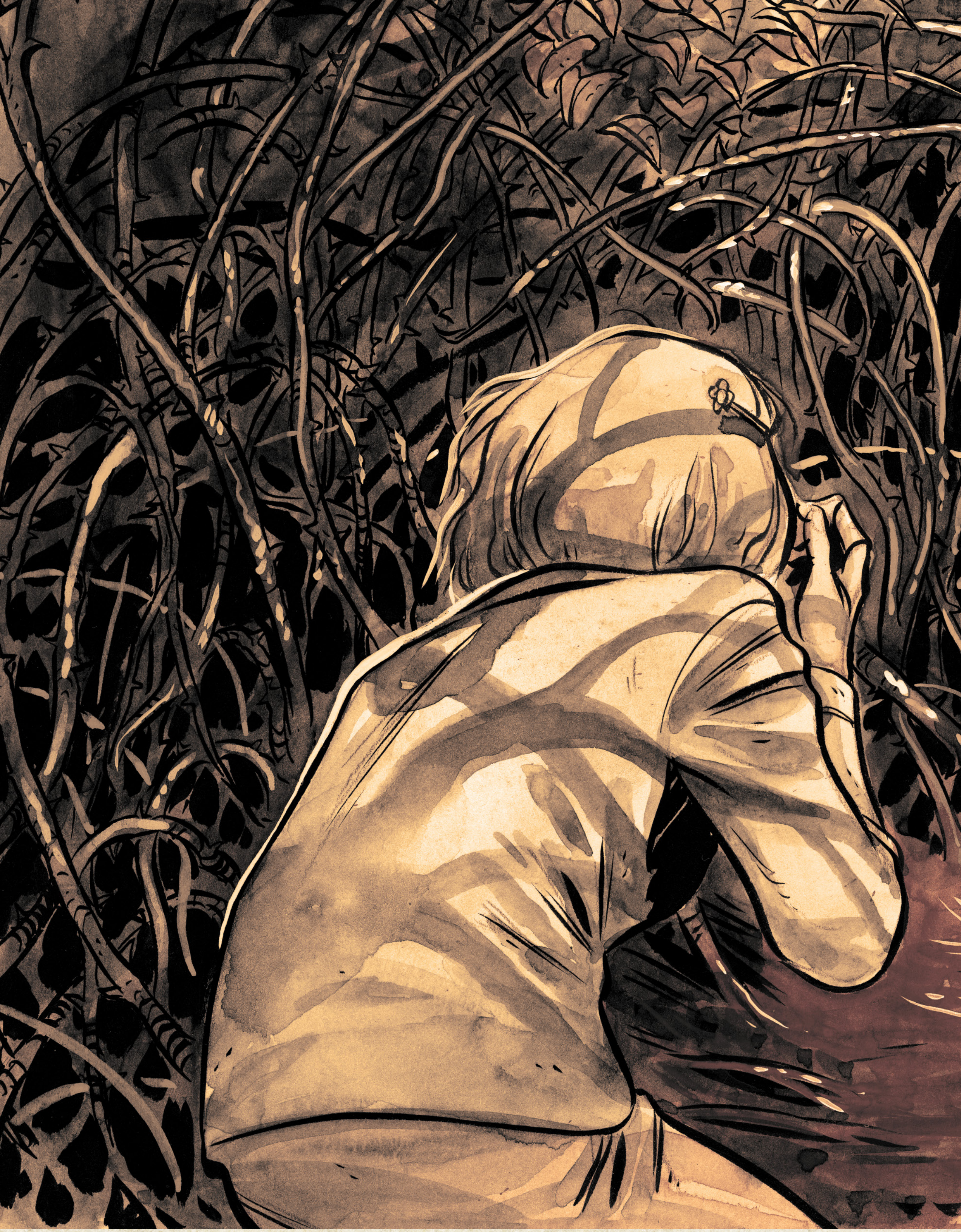
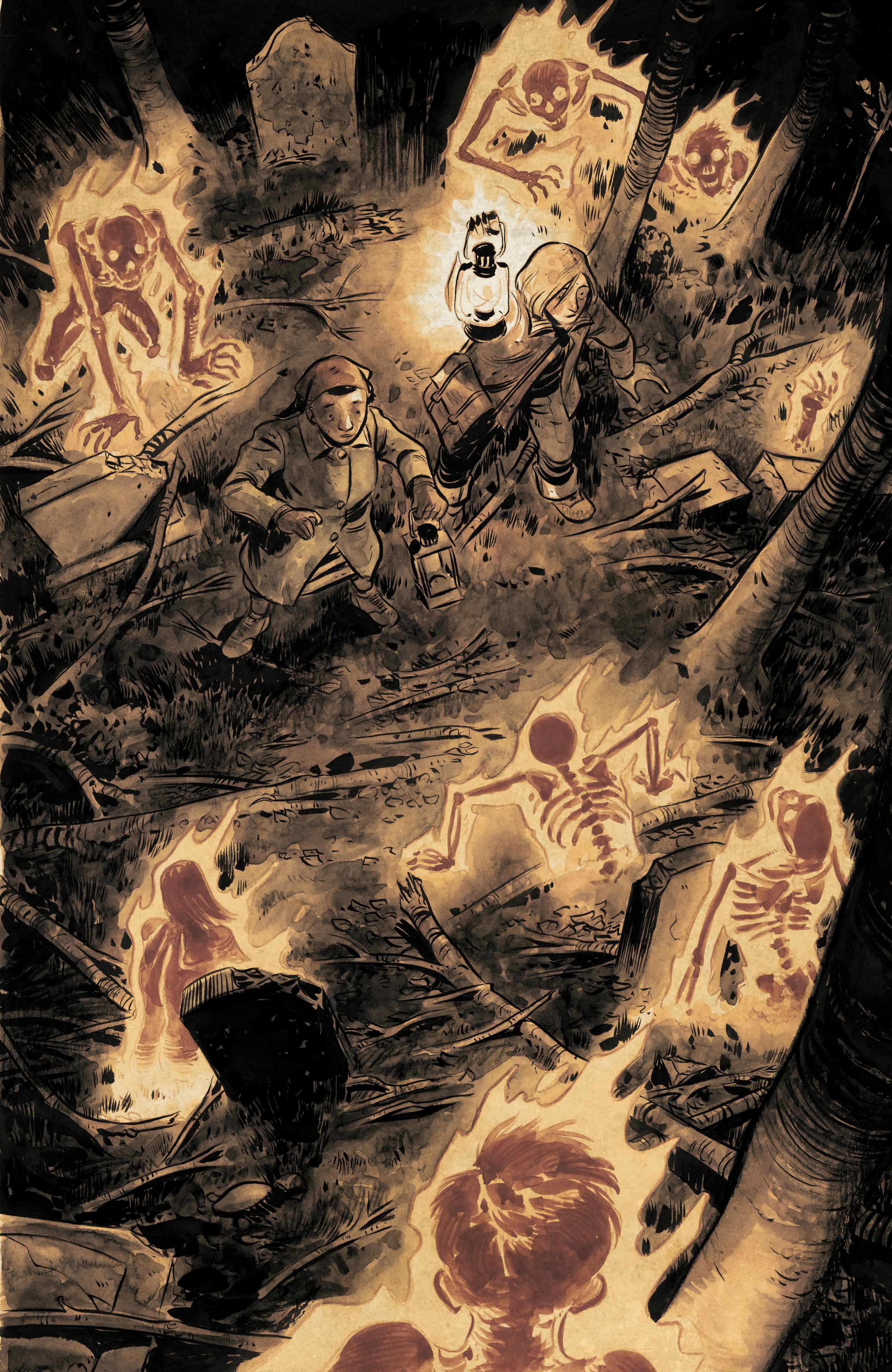


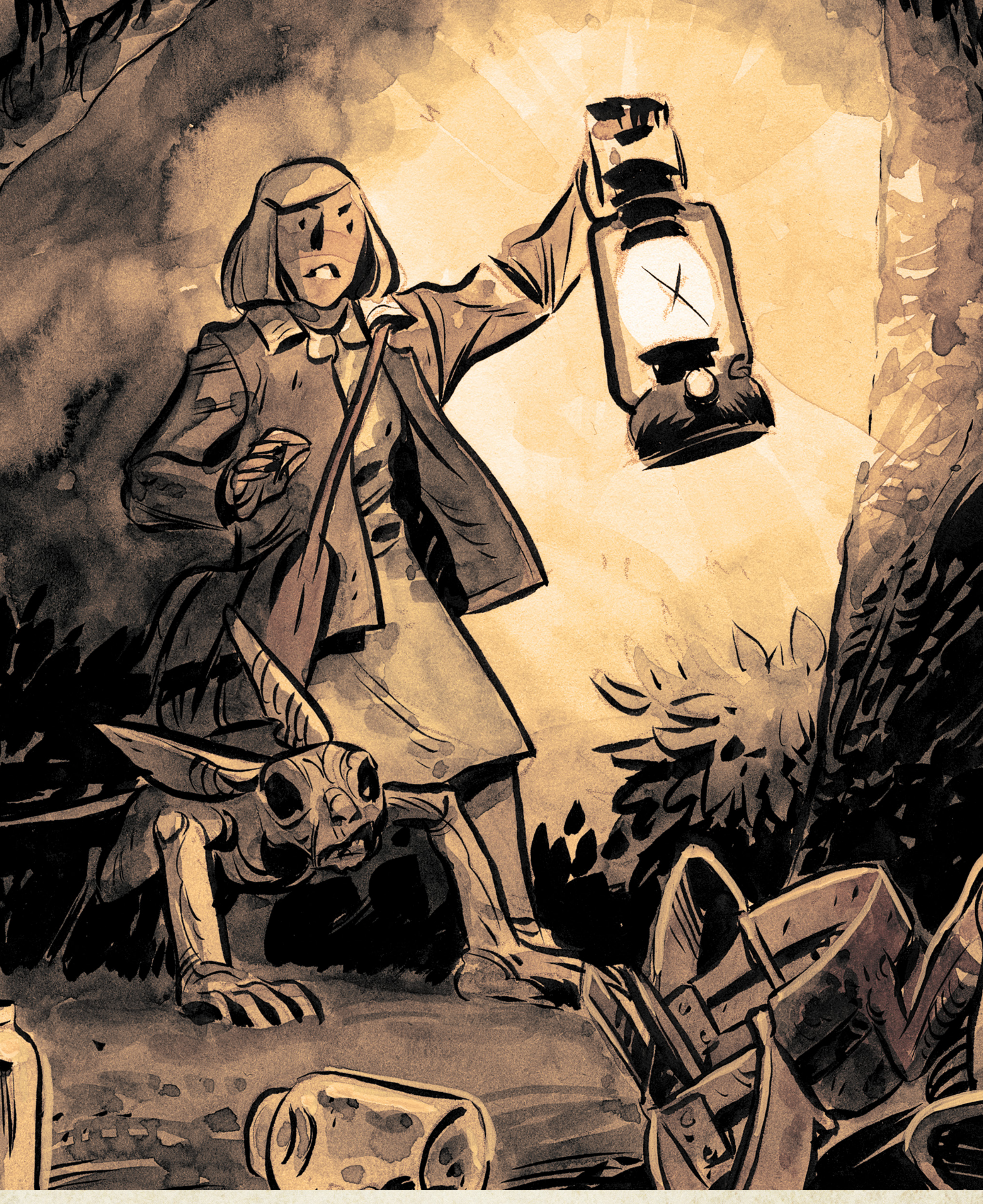
THE TATTERED SKIN

The Skinless Boy's flayed skin still twitches and squirms like a thing alive. While the Skinless Boy can't speak, the Skin hisses and whispers, revealing those things its wayward body sees on its wanderings.

WOODLAND GHOSTS

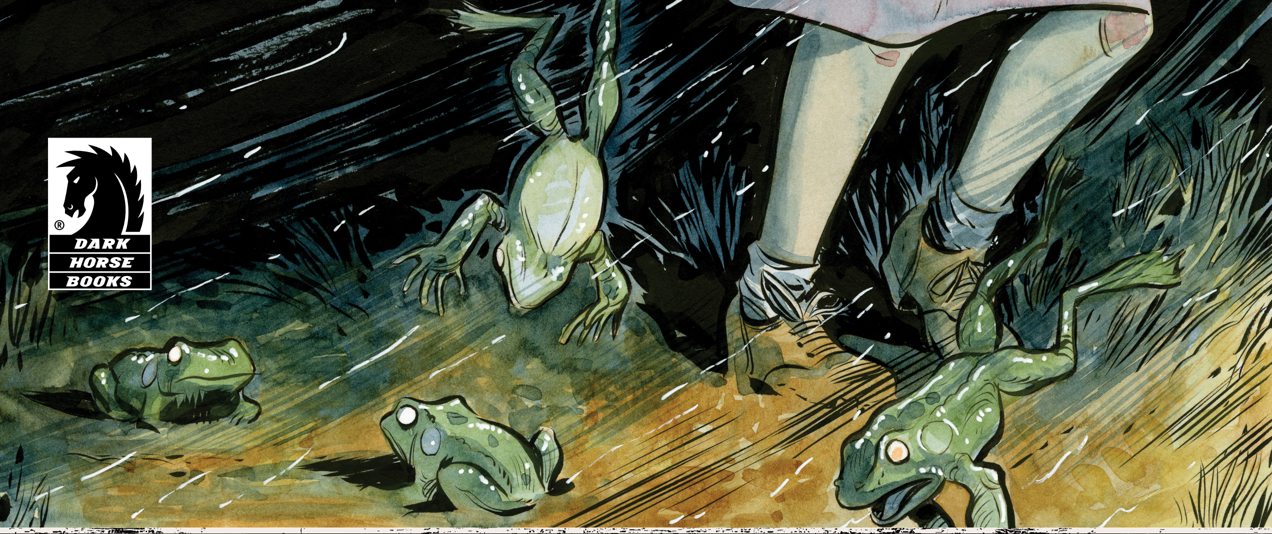
If you're wandering through the woods around Harrow County, you might just stumble across an old cemetery. Tread carefully. If the gravestones are worn bare, make sure you're well on your way home before nightfall. Come dark, lost souls crawl out from the shadows and they light the night with eerie flames, hoping desperately that the glow they cast might illuminate the etchings on the headstones and remind them who they once were.





GOBLINS

Goblins and gremlins are real, my friends, but they aren't indigenous to Harrow. They were brought across the ocean as servants by those who dabbled in weird magic. As the old magicians died off, though, the goblins found they had no cause to continue with their chores. Their minds eventually turned to mischief-making. They were common in the Appalachian Mountains for a time, but they eventually made their way to Harrow County, where they found fertile ground for mayhem.



WELCOME TO HARROW COUNTY...

When a haint comes to Emmy asking for help, she's surprised to learn that one of her oldest friends may be turning against her. While Emmy has been focused on dealing with threats from the outside world, perhaps a much bigger problem has been brewing at home.

This volume collects issues #21–#24 of the southern gothic fairy tale *Harrow County*, scribed by *The Sixth Gun*'s Cullen Bunn, and beautifully and hauntingly realized by *B.P.R.D.*'s Tyler Crook!

PRAISE FOR *HARROW COUNTY*:

"Bunn is also at the top of his game, crafting one moment in particular . . . that had me on the edge of my seat like I was watching a horror movie. I actually started to scream at the comic itself."
—*Adventures in Poor Taste*

"Crook and Bunn do a lot of work to keep you glued to the page with the suspense of every panel."
—*Bounding Into Comics*

"This is one of the best horror series I've ever read. It goes beyond the typical horror stereotypes, and brings a deeper, more sophisticated kind of terror to the audience. This is definitely a series for all horror fans."
—*ComicWow!TV*